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THE CENTENARY EDITION OF
LORD BEACONSFIELD'S EARLIER
NOVELS, EDITED, WITH BIO-
GRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS,
BY LUCIEN WOLF

VIVIAN GREY

VIVIAN GREY

VIVIAN GREY BY THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

VOLUME I

LONDON: ALEXANDER MORING,
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PREFACE

THE present edition of the early novels of the Earl of Beaconsfield, published on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, is essentially biographical.

In all cases the first editions have been reprinted, so that the reader may realise the spirit in which they were written, and thus obtain a fresher and more accurate impression of the development of the individuality of their author than has hitherto been possible. Each work is provided with an introduction in which an effort is made to trace out the circumstances of its composition, and to measure at once the part it played in its author's life, and the part its author himself plays in its story. A few explanatory notes are added at the end, and each novel is equipped with an index to facilitate reference for biographical purposes. The correction of the text has been limited to obvious slips and printer's errors. The original archaisms, eccentricities of spelling and affectations of typography have not been interfered with.

• In preparing the biographical introductions the editor has had the advantage of working throughout with new

material. Much of this material is new in the sense that it has never been used or even known before. For the rest, in no case has a second-hand statement been accepted without question where the original authority was accessible. The whole biography has, in short, been re-studied at its available sources.

INTRODUCTION TO 'VIVIAN GREY'

IT is only fitting that a collection of Lord Beaconsfield's romances should be prefaced by an account of their author's life, for the most incredible of all Lord Beaconsfield's romances is his own career, and the most fascinating elements in his written fiction are autobiographical. There is very little romance in which the subjectivity of the author is more consistently dominant and intense. From start to finish, Lord Beaconsfield's novels are so many echoes and glimpses of the Greater Romance of his own life. It is this which gives them both their charm and their value. The spirit of romance by which they are vivified is not any artificial creation of literary ingenuity or mere conventional product of literary tradition, but the genuine spirit of an intensely romantic and sympathetic personality, picturesquely strange in repose, amazingly daring in action. In so far as they give us a portrait of the man, of the development of his ideas and his ambitions, of his varying environment and of the vicissitudes of his psychological struggles, the novels stand apart in English literature—footnotes or *pièces justificatives* to an important chapter of English history and political biography.

Perhaps the chief exception to this characterisation of Lord Beaconsfield's literary work is to be found in one of his few contributions to sober history. There is more romance of the hollow, conventional kind in the story of his own family, which, in 1848, he prefixed to the

collected edition of his father's works, than in the wildest adventures of Vivian Grey. The tradition of a Hebrew ancestor expelled from Spain by the Inquisition at the end of the fifteenth century and finding a refuge in the Venetian Republic may or may not be true, but there is no evidence to support it. So far as the expulsion is concerned it is a genealogical generalisation in which perhaps two-thirds of the Jews of the Spanish Rite may safely indulge. In Venice itself scarcely any trace of Lord Beaconsfield's ancestors is to be found, and the statement that they assumed in that city 'the name of Disraeli, a name never borne before or since by any other family' can be shown to be erroneous. There is much else in this story relating not only to remote ancestors but even to Lord Beaconsfield's grandfather himself, which belongs to the realm of fable. 'Every man,' said Lord Beaconsfield once, 'has a right to be conceited until he is successful.'¹ In the same spirit it may be said that a man who makes history in his own person has no need to seek for certificates of respectability in the tinsel of genealogical legend.

The truth is that beyond Lord Beaconsfield's grandfather we know little of the Disraelis. Indeed with the prefix D' we know nothing of them at all. The name is not Italian but Arabic, and was used in Moorish Spain and the Levant as a cognomen for Jews whose Jewish character it was desirable to mark. 'El Israeli' meant in fact nothing more than 'the Jew.' In Arabic speaking lands it was used precisely in the same way as when in Medieval England people spoke of 'Aaron the Jew' or 'Cresselin the Jew.' In course of time it became a surname and thus a good many Israelis figure in Jewish history. It may consequently be assumed that Lord Beaconsfield's family was of Levantine origin. They probably migrated from Turkey to Ancona and thence to Cento in Ferrara where, in the fifteenth century, under the mild sway of the Estes, a considerable Jewish community

¹ Preface to *Vivian Grey*, edit. 1853.

had established itself. It was here that Benjamin D'Israeli the elder was born in 1730, the son of one Isaac Israeli whose humble situation in life is attested by the fact that no record has been preserved of his position and transactions. Besides Benjamin, the family consisted of two daughters, Rachel and Venturina, who eventually settled in Venice and established a girls' school in the Ghetto. The story of a brother who flourished as a banker in Venice is apocryphal.¹

Before coming to London in his eighteenth year, Benjamin had resided in Modena, but apparently not in Venice. He came to England in the train of a stream of Italian Jewish emigrants, which had been set in motion partly by the election, early in the eighteenth century, of an Italian, David Nieto, to the post of Chief Rabbi in London, and partly by the English demand for large straw bonnets made from Leghorn chip with which the famous Gunning beauties subsequently drove the world of fashion mad. At first a clerk with very small means, Benjamin established himself in business in 1757 as an importer of straw hats, alum, marble, and Italian produce. Unlucky speculations in Change Alley brought about a crisis in his affairs two years later, but he resumed business both as a merchant and a jobber, and in 1776 became an unlicensed stockbroker. From this time until his death he was fortunate on a middle-class scale. The idea that he was 'a rival of the Rothschilds,' or indeed of any of the great houses in the city of London, is the purest phantasy. As a matter of fact the London House of Rothschild was not established until 1801. He was a member of the Committee of the Stock Exchange Coffee House, who built the present Stock Exchange in 1801, and until 1803, when he retired from business, was a duly qualified member of the House. He died in 1816, leaving a comfortable estate, real and personal, valued at £35,000.²

¹ This information is derived partly from the archives of the Jewish community of Venice and partly from statements made by Benjamin D'Israeli himself.

² MS. materials.

His social position in his best days was that of the well-to-do obscure city merchant. While still a clerk he married Rebecca Mendes Furtado, whose family, together with their relatives the Laras, had been compelled, in 1730, to fly from Portugal by the persecution of the Inquisition. They had been reduced to poverty, and Rebecca had actually been granted a dowry by the Sephardi Marriage Portion Society, but even in Portugal they belonged only to the prosperous trading class. The Mendes Furtados were tobacco merchants at Belmonte, and the Laras were booksellers at Sabugal.¹ By Rebecca, who died in 1765, Benjamin D'Israeli had one daughter, who, after being twice married in London, settled in Leghorn, where her descendants still live. Benjamin's second wife, to whom he was married four months after the death of his first, was Sarah Siprut de Gabay, daughter of a wealthy London merchant, who was related to the Italian branch of the great Jewish family of Villareal, and whose wife was sister-in-law to the Chief Rabbi of Venice, Simon Calimani. This lady brought him a comfortable little dowry of £2000, with which he was enabled to make himself a home in Great St. Helens. Here his only son, Isaac, was born in 1766. It was not until 1780 that Benjamin D'Israeli took a country house at Enfield.² Lord Beaconsfield is mistaken in stating that Sir Horace Mann visited his grandfather there and played whist with him, as Mann, who died in 1786, never quitted Florence in the latter years of his life. On leaving Enfield in 1794, Benjamin D'Israeli tried farming at Woodford for three years, but was not successful,³ and he returned to London and resided for a short period in Wilson Street, Finsbury. Finally, he established himself in Stoke Newington, where he ended his days. Throughout his life he was a steadfast, though not an over-orthodox, member of the synagogue, in which he once served a minor office. His tomb, renovated some

¹ Records of the London Sephardi Congregation and the Lisbon Inquisition.

² Rate Books of Enfield Parish.

³ Ibid., Woodford Parish.

years ago by his grandson, may still be seen in the old Sephardi Cemetery in Mile End.

Benjamin D'Israeli's daughter by his first marriage predeceased him at Leghorn, leaving four daughters, all of whom had been born in London. These, together with his son Isaac by his second wife, were his only descendants. Isaac began life with a 'silver spoon in his mouth.' He was the idol of his maternal grandmother, who left all her property to him, passing over her two daughters, Sarah D'Israeli and Reina de Crasto. Thus rendered independent of his father in his twenty-fifth year, he was enabled to devote himself to the literary studies which resulted in the *Curiosities of Literature*, and a score of other genial essays in anecdote, romance, and criticism—essays which, as his son has truthfully said, 'largely contributed to form the taste, charm the leisure, and direct the studious dispositions of the great body of the public' of his time. In 1802 Isaac married Maria Basevi, youngest daughter of a compatriot of his father, one Naphtali Basevi of Verona, who had settled in London as a merchant in 1762. This marriage was an important event in the D'Israeli family, for it first brought them into close relations with the leading families of the Jewish community, and especially with the cultured section, the Mocattas, the Lindos, the Goldsmids, and the Montefiores, whose minds were beginning to get seriously exercised by the struggle between Ghetto orthodoxy and Mendelssohnian reform then already spreading from the Continent to this country. It is a mistake to imagine that the D'Israelis took no interest in this movement. As a matter of fact, the peace of their household was gravely imperilled by the dissensions to which it gave rise. Mrs. D'Israeli, senior, was frankly for abandoning her unfashionable coreligionists altogether. Her husband clung in an easy-going, but none the less tenacious, fashion to the orthodox traditions of his youth, of which his friend, Basevi, was a conspicuous pillar in the synagogue. Isaac D'Israeli,

like his brother-in-law, Joshua Basevi, and many of his wife's young relatives, was earnest for Reform, and he had already written emphatically in favour of Moses Mendelssohn.¹ Isaac's marriage was also very interesting from another point of view, since it gave his son, Lord Beaconsfield, an English ancestry of at least four generations. Maria D'Israeli, her mother, her maternal grandmother, and her maternal great-grandfather, were all of English birth. This hitherto unnoticed fact attenuates the charge of alienship so frequently brought against Lord Beaconsfield, and assimilates him in a measure with the descendants of Huguenot families whose genealogical history pursued a similar course, and whose Englishness, despite their names and their origin, is never questioned.

Isaac and Maria D'Israeli went into housekeeping at 6 King's Road, Bedford Row, now Theobald's Road. The neighbourhood was then not the unfashionable and untidy quarter it is now—the adjoining house was occupied by Lady Sanderson, wife of 'Sinner Saved' Hunting-down²—but its chief attraction for Isaac D'Israeli was, of course, its proximity to the British Museum. In this house all his children were born, Sarah in 1802, Benjamin in 1804, Naphtali in 1807, Raphael in 1809, and Jacob in 1813. The exact date of Benjamin's birth was, according to the Synagogue Register, the 19th of Tebet 5565, corresponding with the 21st December. The period in which he saw the light was, for some mysterious reason, singularly favourable to the manifestation of Jewish genius. Heine was still in short frocks, Saphir was a schoolboy, and Boerne a student. Meyerbeer was ten years old; the classic Mendelssohn-Bartholdy came five years later, to be followed within still a few years by the gay laughter of Offenbach and the tragic emotion of Rachel. The whole broad gamut of Jewish genius was, indeed, summed up in the birth register of this period, for on the heels of D'Israeli the younger came Auerbach the novelist,

¹ *Monthly Magazine*, vi. pt. ii. (1798) pp. 39-44. c

² Jerdan, *Autobiography*, iii. p. 223.

Sylvester the mathematician, and Lassalle—‘Messiah’ Lassalle—the most brilliant and most romantic figure in the whole history of the nineteenth century.

At eight days Benjamin was duly initiated into the ancient covenant of Abraham by his aunt’s brother-in-law, David Abarbanel Lindo, and was named, not, as is generally supposed, after his paternal grandfather—it being contrary to Jewish custom to name a child after a living relative—but after his maternal uncle, Benjamin Basevi, who died in 1795. He grew up to be a bright, boisterous, and straightforward boy. ‘My son Ben,’ writes his father to John Murray in 1809, ‘assures me he saw you. Now he never lies.’¹ Buckland, his father’s butler, used to gossip with pride in his old age of the games of pick-a-back he was compelled to play with the predestined statesman.² From the nursery, Ben was sent at an early age to a young ladies’ school at Stoke Newington, and thence to Mr. Poticary’s at Blackheath. Here he remained until close upon his thirteenth year. Although the school was essentially Christian, care was taken—no doubt at his grandfather’s instance—that his religious training as a Jew should not be neglected. Together with a school-fellow named Moses Saqui, who came from the West Indies, and was also a Jew, he received once a week instruction in Hebrew and the traditions and observances of his Judaic faith from a visiting rabbi.³ We have more than one glimpse—transfigured by the exigencies of romance—of these schooldays in *Vivian Grey*. That he had already begun to take an interest in the affairs of the great world is attested by the fact that he was allowed to subscribe for and read *Bell’s Weekly Messenger*, a privilege which made him something of an oracle among his school chums. Like Vivian Grey, too, he had a taste for amateur theatricals, and on one occasion he performed Gratiano to Saqui’s Shylock.⁴

¹ Smiles, *Memoir of John Murray*, i. p. 164.

² Cowtan, *Memoirs of the British Museum*, p. 323.

³ *Jewish Chronicle*, May 29, 1868.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Meanwhile the struggle between the progressive and orthodox sections in the old Sephardi Synagogue in Bevis Marks had begun to assume threatening proportions. Isaac D'Israeli had found the serenity of his library disturbed by more than one echo of the controversy.¹ He would, however, have been content to watch it from afar had it not been that in 1813 he was unexpectedly elected to the post of warden of the congregation, and on his declining to serve was mulcted in a heavy fine. He had neither the taste nor the energy for synagogue politics, and although his sympathies with his people were warm and sincere, he resented their interference with the calm of his student life.¹ The unyielding attitude of the ultra-orthodox party then in power in Bevis Marks deepened his irritation; and when, towards the end of 1816, his father died, he resolved to terminate his connection with the synagogue. Personally he remained an unattached Jew of the more frigid Reform Wing; and twenty-six years later, when he was old and blind, he attended the consecration of the first Reform Synagogue in Burton Crescent, which crowned the efforts of those of his relatives and friends who, in a more sanguine and self-sacrificing spirit, had elected to remain on the battle-field. But this was obviously an impossible situation for his children, and he was not unnaturally persuaded, chiefly by his old and attached friend, Sharon Turner, to give them the opportunity of some sort of religious instruction in the Christian fold. In July 1817 he made the plunge by having his two youngest children, Raphael (Ralph) and Jacob (James) baptized. That this step had not been long in contemplation is shown by the fact that Jacob had been initiated into the Abrahamic covenant only four years before. Benjamin followed his brothers into the Church on the last day of July, and Sarah was admitted four weeks later. Naphtali had died in infancy, and had been gathered to his people with all the rites of the Hebrew Church long before this crisis in his family arose.

¹ Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, cap. xxxix.

It now became necessary to find a new school for Benjamin, and he was confided to a Mr. Cogan who kept an academy for Unitarians at Higham Hill. His stay here was short and apparently not over-pleasant. Handsome and clever, the romp of a few years before had now become a very decided prig. But he was a prig who could take his own part, for, like most of the Sephardi youth of those days, he was a devotee of the 'noble science' of which Dan Mendoza and Aby Belasco were then the most brilliant exponents.¹ The peace of Mr. Cogan's academy became seriously disturbed, and Benjamin returned to Bloomsbury, his school days at an end.

With indulgent and easy-going parents, any other boy of his age would have been exposed to serious perils in the life which now opened to him. But Benjamin had the precocity of his Syrian forefathers, and at fifteen he took himself quite seriously. In his father's library he crammed all sorts of out-of-the-way learning, and at his father's dinner-table he cultivated the gifted society of the paternal cronies—men like Gifford and Coleridge, Sharon Turner and Crofton Croker, John Murray, the publisher, and Francis Cohen, afterwards Sir Francis Palgrave. Occasionally it fell to him to air his 'devil of a tongue' before celebrities of the day like Washington Irving and Belzoni. It was not, however, in this somewhat snuffy atmosphere that the bright and audacious lad found his most congenial *milieu*. After his father's death, Isaac D'Israeli had moved from King's Road to a large house in Bloomsbury Square, close to Hart Street. Here he became acquainted with a young and prosperous solicitor named Benjamin Austen,² then living in Great Coram Street, whose wife speedily became intimate with Mrs. D'Israeli. When the Austens moved into Guildford Street the two families became almost inseparable. It

¹ Cf. Layard, *Autobiography*, p. 48.

² Third son of Nathaniel Austen of Ramsgate; admitted to Gray's Inn, June 9, 1812; married Sara Rickett (born 1796, died 1888). Benjamin Austen's sister, Mary Anne, married H. P. J. Layard, and was the mother of Sir Henry Austen Layard.

was a curious coincidence that Mr. and Mrs. Austen bore respectively the *prénoms* of Isaac D'Israeli's two elder children. Sara Austen had, however, other attractions. She was an unusually bright and clever young woman, young enough—she was only twenty-three—to charm the young people of the D'Israeli household. 'In youth,' writes her nephew, Sir Henry Layard, 'she was endowed with no ordinary beauty. She was highly accomplished, a proficient in music, an amateur artist of no common skill, possessed great conversational powers, and had a rare command of her pen.' Her tastes were more *mondain* than those of the semi-antiquarian circle which collected round Isaac D'Israeli. She affected the society of wits, and in her drawing-room the youthful Benjamin caught his first glimpse of the sparkling world for which his flippant and dandified genius seemed pre-eminently adapted. 'There is,' he wrote in his first novel, 'no fascination so irresistible to a boy as the smile of a married woman.'¹ Mrs. Austen became young D'Israeli's closest friend, the confidant of his scrapes, projects, and ambitions, his providence in trouble, his critic and literary adviser, and later on even his editor.²

Isaac D'Israeli's library and Sara Austen's boudoir were thus the university in which young Benjamin graduated. The one was the complement of the other. Among his father's books, and with his father's example of painstaking reading and research before him, he acquired a smattering of scholarship and laid the foundations for a serviceable knowledge of political and literary history. The Austens and their circle gave him the measure of the value of his studies in the practical business of social success and political ambition on which his youthful vanity was already set. Encouraged by Mrs. Austen he began to scribble romance. A contribution to Leigh Hunt's *Indicator* in July 1820, entitled 'A True Story,'

¹ *Vivian Grey* (present edition), vol. i. p. 24.

² Layard, *Autobiography*, pp. 17, 18, 47-52; *Quarterly Review*, July 1889, pp. 1-42 (article by Sir H. A. Layard).

is believed to have been written by him, although the identification rests only on a certain wildness in the style, and the Δ with which it is signed.

In all this, however, there seemed little promise of a career. Although in literary taste father and son were gradually drifting apart, their personal relations remained intensely affectionate. The tender indulgence of the parent was indeed inexhaustible. Still, with two other sons and a grown-up daughter to provide for, he was naturally dubious of a literary career for his superficially-educated eldest boy, while Ben's ulterior dreams could only have been regarded by him as the venial extravagances of spoilt youth. Not quite so indulgent were his wife's practical and hard-hearted brothers. They felt it was time that their erratic nephew was put into leading-strings, and in this sense they held forth to the good-natured D'Israeli couple on the Bloomsbury Square hearth-rug. Acting under their advice, Isaac articled his son, towards the end of 1821, to a firm of solicitors in the city, Messrs. Swain, Stevens, Maples, Pearse and Hunt of 6 Frederick Place, Old Jewry, and three years later entered him as a student of Lincoln's Inn. He also arranged for him to read law in the chambers of his nephew, Nathaniel Basevi, the conveyancer. Nevertheless, Benjamin still pursued his own course, although he did not altogether neglect the opportunity of acquiring a new discipline under the office rules of Frederick Place, and of delving in the fields of useful knowledge which the law opened to him. In and out of office hours he scribbled and read industriously. He often scandalised his prematurely serious cousin, Basevi, by arriving at his chambers in Old Square with Spenser's *Fairie Queene* under his arm. Benjamin Austen, in whose office he spent a few months, was the first to see that he would never make a lawyer, and he advised Isaac D'Israeli to let him devote himself to literature.¹ John Murray, whose heart had been completely won by

¹ Layard, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48. Austen one day discovered young Disraeli reading Chaucer in chambers, and wrote to his father to complain of it.

the bright and clever lad, came to the same conclusion, but, in a more practical spirit, put literary work in his way. In 1822 he sent him the MS. of a tragedy with a request for his written opinion of its merits. He also encouraged him to write a romance. This work, completed in May 1824, was entitled *Aylmer Papillon*, and was apparently a first draft of *Popanilla*. Sara Austen seems to have collaborated with him in it; but, in spite of their united efforts, it was never published in its original form.¹

Besides Sara Austen, young Disraeli—he had already dropped the patronymic apostrophe—had at this time two friends of the opposite sex to whom he was much attached. One was William Meredith, the nephew and adopted son of a retired Twickenham contractor; the other Thomas Mullett Evans, a fellow-clerk at Frederick Place. Meredith was a young man of leisure and literary tastes who had fallen in love with Benjamin's sister Sarah. Evans's inclinations were financial, and his ambition was to make a fortune in a hurry. They both responded to the conviction which was gradually deepening in young Disraeli's mind, that if he was to cut a figure in the great world, and especially to achieve the POWER—in very large letters—which was the secret object of all his dreams, he required either literary distinction or a large fortune to begin with. These were the only means by which he could be rescued from the middle-class society to which his deficiency of 'a little rascal blood' threatened to condemn him.² But which was he to choose, and how was he to get either when he had chosen? Sara Austen believed in his lively pen and urged him to ply it, but the shrewd John Murray had virtually declined his first novel. In the city, he and Evans conned schemes for working the alchemy of Throgmorton Street to the tune of a cool million, but they failed to impress the indispensable but unimaginative stockbrokers. While he was thus groping for his destiny, the stars were, as usual, mapping it out for him in their own inscrutable way.

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 108, 182-184.

² *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. pp. 23, 25.

In the autumn of 1824, they contrived that he should take a holiday with his friend Meredith in the Netherlands and the Rhine country.¹ This trip contributed in no small degree to the eventual solution of his perplexities. He only travelled for a few weeks, but his observant eye and his penetrative imagination filled his mind with a vast store of new and romantic impressions, of which he was able, two years later, to make very effective use.

Meanwhile he was destined to pass through a serious moral crisis—in some respects the most serious and most far-reaching in his whole life. He returned home from Germany on the eve of dramatic events in the political world. For two years Canning, baffled by the forces of European Reaction at the Congress of Verona, had been intent on a new basis for British foreign policy. It was the more startling since it proposed to reverse, for the benefit of the revolted South American Colonies of Spain, the relative rôles of Great Britain and the Continental Powers as sustained by them during the American Revolution, and it proposed to do this in cordial co-operation with the revolted North American Colonies themselves. Benjamin Disraeli had given but little earnest attention to the merits of the political questions of the day. They did not appeal to him as means to his Great End, and if by any chance they were calculated to develop that wonder-working claim on his consideration, he was quite prepared to take any view of them that might best suit his own purposes. When, at the beginning of 1825, Canning ‘called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old,’ the enthusiasm of the nation left him cold. We may see this in the first indubitably authentic work issued from his pen. The Anglo-American reconciliation had suggested to John Murray the publication of an English edition of a *Life of Paul Jones*, by Henry Sherburne, and he had asked young Disraeli to prepare it for the press and write a preface to

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* ii. p. 201; *Quarterly Review*, July 1889, p. 11.

it.¹ The commission was accepted, but apparently with no great enthusiasm. By way of emphasising the actuality of the publication, the editor was of course compelled to refer to the question then uppermost in the public mind, but the evenly-balanced platitudes in which he acquitted himself of his task might have been envied by Mr. Justice Stareleigh :—

‘Every account of the life of an extraordinary individual, no matter of what country or of what profession, is extremely valuable. It increases our experience of human nature. But it is not merely upon this ground that the life of Paul Jones is worthy the attention of the reader. The age in which he lived was the parallel of the present one. The revolt of the Anglo-American colonies had produced, in the mind of Europe, a similar effect to that which is the consequence of the revolt of Mexico and the States of South America. The same passions were excited in the eighteenth century ; governments were placed in similar situations ; and new interests then arose, as are now arising. In becoming acquainted with the secret thoughts and conduct of the most eminent of the revolutionary leaders, much light will be thrown upon transactions which are now the objects of our observation ; and by entering into the cabinets of Europe at the latter end of the last century, we may discover the situation of some of the cabinets of the present one. We may become acquainted with prime ministers, stripped of their diplomatic decencies, and while we commiserate the difficulties of their situation, we may learn by what principles their political conduct is dictated. Such are the points upon which this volume will instruct us.’²

It is not a little surprising to find that within a very few weeks of penning these singularly bald and colourless reflections their author had become a convinced and impassioned Canningite.

How the transformation was effected is no very great mystery. The story in itself is not very edifying, but it is necessary to set it out at some length here, partly

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* pp. 182, 194.

² *Life of Paul Jones* (Lond. 1825) pp. vi.-vii.

because of the profound and salutary influence it exerted over Disraeli's subsequent career, and partly because it is the only real key to his first novel, *Vivian Grey*.

The recognition of the South American republics by Great Britain gave a powerful impetus to the speculative mania which the coincidence of the reduction of the interest on the National Debt, and the opening up of fresh fields for usurious investment in the revolted colonies, had set on foot in 1824. Never since the South Sea Bubble had the passion for gambling so strongly possessed the English public. The old fables of the wealth of El Dorado had become the staple of joint-stock company prospectuses, and fairy visions of the legendary treasure of Peru and Mexico pouring into the lap of England irradiated the whole country. Loans, mining companies, and hundreds of other more or less wild joint-stock enterprises were launched by the city houses, and the scrip was bought and sold by the people with an enthusiasm which sent prices bounding up in the Official List. From their office stools in Frederick Place, Disraeli and Evans watched this gleaming Pactolus flowing by them with hungry eyes. On all sides fortunes were being made and they were powerless to participate in them. Occasionally some of the great financial houses sought the professional assistance of Messrs. Swain, Stevens, Maples, Pearse, and Hunt in their company-mongering, but they belonged for the most part to the Hebrew contingent in the city—the Goldsmids and Montefiores—whose orthodoxy was not likely to render them tolerant of the religious defection of the Disraelis. Moreover, there was an ancient feud between the Montefiores and the Disraelis dating back to certain disagreeable litigation in the days of Benjamin's grandfather. Among the clients of Frederick Place, however, was one firm which was free from these embarrassing reminiscences. This was the house of J. and A. Powles and Company, of Freeman's Court, Cornhill, South American merchants and shipping

brokers, the *sub rosa* associates of the Barclays in the Guatemala Loan, and the promoters of several dazzling companies which were favourites with the fortune hunters. Their name was at that moment on everybody's lips, for in January 1825 the £10 shares of one of their companies—the Anglo-Mexican Mining Association—had sold for no less a sum than £150. When Messrs. Powles promoted the Columbian Mining Association, the drafting of the prospectus was confided to Messrs. Swain, Stevens, and Company, and in connection with this work Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, to his intense gratification, made the acquaintance of a member of the promoting house, and one of the directors of the company, Mr. John Diston Powles.

Here was the opportunity for which he had so long sought. Mr. Powles was rich, amiable, and intelligent. His financial reputation does not appear to have been of the best, but until the Bubble burst it stood high enough in Capel Court.¹ With Benjamin Disraeli he speedily struck up a close friendship. The truth of course was that he also had an axe to grind. The peculiarity of the financial mania of 1824-25 was the extension of the joint-stock principle to the needs of the small investor and gambler. Hence publicity was of the first importance to the company-mongers. The money article in the daily newspapers was beginning to take a place among the recognised oracles of the press, but pamphlets were still the favourite means of influencing public opinion. In these circumstances the brilliant young lawyer's clerk was a god-send to the shrewd Mr. Powles. He had written pamphlets himself,² but they paled before the possibilities of young Disraeli's glowing pen, with the distributing machinery of the great house of Murray—perhaps even the weighty influence of the *Quarterly Review*—behind it. Benjamin found the wealthy John

¹ Richardson, *Mr. J. D. Powles or the Antecedents of an Administrative Reformer* (1855).

² e.g. Powles, *A Letter to Alexander Baring, Esq., M.P.* (1825).

an easier conquest than Vivian Grey found the Marquis of Carabas. They became friends, confidants, soon confederates. The lawyer's clerk sat in the councils of mushroom capitalists and probed the secrets of high politics with the swarthy and beribboned envoys of the upstart republics. The wits of Sara Austen's salon in Guildford Street were eclipsed, for the index of fortune pointed clearly to the money market. Sidonia had the ball at his feet.

The first fruits of this alliance were three bulky pamphlets on South American finance, which Mr. Murray agreed to publish for Disraeli on commission.¹ There can be no question as to the object of these pamphlets. A discordant note had begun to manifest itself in the carnival of speculation. Prudent men had been heard to hint a doubt as to the warrant for the inflated prices of mining stock, and some of them had even denounced the dazzling quotations as the Dead Sea fruit of mere gambling. In certain law cases which had come before the courts, Lord Eldon, the Chancellor, had spoken significantly of the pains and penalties of the Bubble Act, and there were rumours of Bills in Parliament to restrain the activities of the joint-stock exploiters. The company-mongers, who had been bulling the market, became uneasy, and John Powles requisitioned the pen of his new friend to reassure the public.

Early in March the first pamphlet was issued from Albemarle Street. It was entitled, 'An Enquiry into the Plans, Progress, and Policy of American Mining Companies,' and was intended to show that, as city profits went, there was nothing remarkable in the high prices commanded by the stock of such excellent investments as the South American Mining Companies, especially those of Mexico, and more particularly those of Messrs. Powles. It carried the war into the enemy's camp by indignantly denouncing the authors of the idea that these investments were 'the base conception of designing men'

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 185, 254.

as themselves reckless sensation-mongers. Then it examined 'the plans, progress, and policy' of each company separately—Messrs. Powles's ventures coming first—and triumphantly demonstrated their individual and collective solidity.

The second pamphlet, which followed closely on the heels of the first, was entitled 'Lawyers and Legislators, or Notes on the American Mining Companies.' This was a characteristic specimen of the Disraelite offensive. It is indeed well worth reading even now as a juvenile example of all the varieties of a style which was destined to become famous in senatorial oratory. Lord Eldon and Mr. Baring, M.P., were the 'lawyer and legislator' chiefly *visés*. The pamphlet pungently heckled Lord Eldon for his indiscreet attempts to throw discredit on the Mining Companies; it denounced the Bubble Act with an imposing display of legal erudition, and it gravely rebuked Mr. Baring for the mischievous thoughtlessness and financial ignorance of his speech on the 'gambling mania' in the House of Commons in the previous month. Of course Mr. Powles was not left out of it. Mr. Powles had published an open letter in reply to Mr. Baring, and this was quoted with lofty and judicial approval by the anonymous author of 'Lawyers and Legislators.' He had but one fault to find with it:—

'We regret to observe that Mr. Powles's name is not graced by an M.P. Had these manly and satisfactory observations been spoken in the House of Commons immediately after the statement of Mr. Baring, they must have produced a very great effect.'¹

Mr. Powles's pamphleteer was naturally an enthusiastic Canningite and a firm believer in Anglo-Saxon reunion. His second work was indeed dedicated to Canning, 'who is not more eminent for his brilliant wit and classic eloquence than for that sedate sublimity of conception which distinguishes the practical statesman from the

¹ *Lawyers and Legislators*, pp. 63-64.

political theorist.' On the subject of Anglo-American relations the opinion was expressed

'that the prosperity of England mainly depends upon its relations with America, and that in proportion as the energies of America are developed and her resources strengthened, will the power and prosperity of England be confirmed and increased.'

Whether this eminently statesmanlike sentiment was the outcome of real political sagacity is rendered rather doubtful by the chief inference which its author drew from it :—

'It is because we feel this that we would demand of our legislators whether, as the ministers of a free, a commercial and a powerful people, they ought not merely to leave the American Mining Companies unmolested, but to assist their agency, patronise their plans and encourage their efforts ?'¹

The third pamphlet—'The Present State of Mexico'—was chiefly the production of a Mexican politician, and was only edited and annotated by young Disraeli.

How far these publications tended to stave off the eventual crash cannot be accurately traced at this distance of time. They were unquestionably circulated in very large numbers, and must have effectively served the purposes of the financiers in whose interest they were written. That Mr. Powles and his associates were abundantly satisfied, and that Disraeli had established a very large claim on their confidence, if not their gratitude, is indeed shown by the sequel.

Disraeli's plans now began to assume a more complex form. Certain confidences imparted to him early in the year by John Murray had suggested to him a scheme for achieving the social and political influence on which his heart was set far more rapidly and effectively than through the always tainted medium of a fortune scooped on 'Change. Murray, encouraged by the success of the *Quarterly Review*, had long wished to found a periodical

¹ *Lawyers and Legislators*, pp. 7-8.

of more popular scope and more frequent appearance. His ideas, however, were comparatively modest. Until the spring of 1825, he contemplated nothing more ambitious than a weekly literary review. When, however, he communicated his project to Disraeli, 'the unrelenting excitement and importunity'—as he afterwards bitterly wrote—of that persuasive and daring young gentleman soon prevailed upon him to widen his horizon. Through the *Quarterly*, he was in contact with the leading politicians and men of letters of the day, while Disraeli through Powles—so he said and so, no doubt, he thought—had 'all America and the commercial interest' at his back. Here surely were the materials, not for a trumpery literary review, but for 'a mighty engine,' which would speedily eclipse the *Times*. As for the capital, that was a bagatelle which 'all America and the commercial interest' would easily arrange.

Murray seems to have been quickly won over to the grandiose scheme, and Powles, not less dazzled by the prospect of securing for his unstable interests the support of a powerful political organ, readily consented to associate himself with it. In August, the three parties entered into a Memorandum of Agreement for the publication of a new morning paper, the capital of which was to be supplied, in respect to one half, by John Murray, and, in respect to the other, by John Diston Powles and Benjamin Disraeli, in equal shares.¹ Although from the beginning, Disraeli was ostensibly only a minor personage in the concern, he was in reality its life and soul. His own cynical conception of the part he was to play in it may be read clearly between the lines of his correspondence with John Murray, and especially in the transparent parables of his first novel. He asked for and desired no official position. John Murray was to be manager, Lockhart, if possible, editor, Powles no doubt, was to find the capital for both himself and partner. They were the Cleveland,

¹ The story of the *Representative* is told in Smiles's *Memoir of John Murray*, vol. ii. cap. xxvi.

the Carabas, the Courtown, the Beaconsfield of the 'mighty engine'; he was the brain, the god in the clouds, the 'political Puck,' in a word the Vivian Grey, who in the fulness of time would use them all, together with the 'mighty engine' they had founded, for his own vast ambitions. To secure his influence, he stipulated for the political independence of the paper, except apparently in regard to a new party—'a most immense party'—which he proposed to organise out of the varying interests then converging about him. The scheme was not a little unscrupulous, but in justice it must be said that it did not altogether commend itself to his finer feelings. It must, indeed, have lacerated them somewhat seriously, to judge by the magnitude of the consolation he sought—nothing less than 'the ancient tales of Jupiter's visits to the earth':—

'In these fanciful adventures, the God bore no indication of the Thunderer's glory; but was a man of low estate, a herdsman or other hind; and often even an animal. A mighty spirit has in *Tradition*, Time's great moralist, perused "the wisdom of the ancients." Even in the same spirit, I would explain Jove's terrestrial visitings. For, to govern man even the God appeared to feel as a man; and, sometimes as a beast, was apparently influenced by their vilest passions. Mankind, then, is my great game.'¹

The next four months were spent by the scheming Benjamin in a ceaseless round of excitement and hard work. The new journal had to appear in January 1826, and there was not much time in which to make the preliminary arrangements. His first care was to get himself placed in personal communication with the political and literary contingent to be supplied by Albemarle Street. John Murray's influence had not been over-rated by him. One memorable morning the good-natured publisher took him to Gloucester Lodge to see the great Canning himself. It was only a glimpse, but it must have served enormously to consolidate the influence

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. p. 26.

of the twenty-year-old impressario with his city backers. Another personage with whom Murray made him acquainted, and with whom he speedily established friendly relations, was Robert Wilmot Horton, then Under-Secretary for War and the Colonies, the confidant of Byron, the intimate of the Prime Minister, and the friend of the gifted and fascinating Lady Caroline Lamb. Sir John Barrow, Secretary of the Admiralty, invited him to his African dinners, and Sir John Malcolm, fresh from his splendid services in Persia and the Deccan, also opened his doors to him and talked to him of the wonders of the East. All succumbed to the magic of his personal charm and pledged themselves to support the new venture. Such was his success with them that in a letter to Murray in September, he did not hesitate to speak of them as 'distinctly in our power.'

The most important transaction in which he was involved by the launching of the new paper was a mission to Scotland. In the same way as the Carabas party required an official chief with a recognised reputation, the new paper needed an editor of social and political influence. In this quest as in the other the negotiation was confided to Vivian Grey. Murray was anxious to secure Lockhart, and he bethought himself of appealing to Sir Walter Scott to assist him. Disraeli, with his wonderful tact and his 'devil of a tongue' was clearly marked out for the delicate enterprise. With a volume of Froissart in his pocket, he set out for Scotland in September to lay the matter before Sir Walter, and to discuss terms with Lockhart. The mission occupied three weeks, and the record of it contained in his letters to Murray is an amazing testimony to his self-confidence. If he did not succeed in overcoming the scruples of Lockhart it was only because success was impossible. He managed, however, so completely to ingratiate himself with the 'wary Northern genius' and his dignified son-in-law that he fully believed he had succeeded in the negotiation which he conducted with all the mystery and

dignity of an affair of state. He paid a second visit to Abbotsford and Chiefswood in November to offer Lockhart, on behalf of Murray, the editorship of the *Quarterly*. In this mission, which was intended to get Lockhart into the new paper by a side wind, he was more successful. He rambled with Sir Walter for a week on his beloved Tweedside, established a new bond with Lockhart in a common antipathy to Croker, visited the neighbouring gentry, and dined with Dr., afterwards Sir David, Brewster at Allerly.¹ Then he returned to London to give the finishing touches to the 'mighty engine.' During one crowded month he organised the offices in George Street, Westminster, of which his cousin, George Basevi, junr., was the architect, instructed correspondents abroad and in the City, engaged sub-editors and reporters, and finally christened the new paper the *Representative*, a title which delighted everybody concerned in it.

Then the crash came. 'Strange to say,' writes Dr. Smiles in his *Life of John Murray*, 'from this time forward nothing more is heard of Mr. Benjamin Disraeli in connection with the *Representative*.' If, however, we look at the date the mystery does not appear so strange. It was in the third week of December that the paper was named, and within a few days the proprietors would have had to provide their several shares of the capital under the partnership agreement. Meanwhile the ground, all unperceived by Disraeli, had been slipping away under his feet. In the City the struggle between mania and panic had become more and more intense, and gradually panic had been gaining on mania. While Disraeli was being fêted at Abbotsford, Messrs. Powles were fighting Barclays in the law courts over the Guatemala repudiation. On December 17 the Bubble burst. Dismay and ruin spread through the country, and although Messrs. Powles seemed to be weathering the storm, they were scarcely prepared to listen sympathetically to Disraeli, when a few

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* 224-226 ; Gordon, *Life of Sir D. Brewster*, p. 333.

days later he called at Freeman's Court to announce to them that the moment for paying over some thousands of pounds into the *Representative* exchequer had arrived. What followed cannot be told in detail. Suffice it that when Murray applied to his partners for their shares of the capital he found that he had been duped. On his side the ardent Benjamin saw his gorgeous dreams vanish as by the withering spell of some maleficent necromancer. In one short day the glittering votary of the 'Empire of the Intellect,'¹ the curled oracle of Albemarle Street, the hope of the money market, the flattered associate of statesmen, diplomatists, and famous men of letters, the unseen power which had made even Printing House Square tremble, became once more a simple lawyer's clerk, mocked at in Cornhill and cut in Piccadilly. His impassioned offers to explain everything to John Murray were icily responded to with a statement of account for printing and publishing the Powles pamphlets, and a request for an early settlement. His applications to Powles to pay the bill were met by a cool repudiation of responsibility. In these circumstances the mystery of his sudden disappearance from the councils of the *Representative* is surely not very perplexing.²

Miss Martineau has left us in her *History of the Thirty Years' Peace* a moving picture of the desolation and misery wrought by the panic of 1825 ; but it is doubtful whether, among the thousands who were driven forth into penury by that financial convulsion, there were many to whom it brought a blacker sense of disaster than to the brilliant Bloomsbury boy whose overvaulting ambition it shattered so ignominiously. On the very threshold of life he found himself weighted with shameful failure. Where others of his age had the generous confidence of friends to start with he had now only suspicion and dis-

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. p. 213.

² The *Representative* nevertheless appeared, but proved a disastrous failure. It only lasted six months. John Murray's loss amounted to £26,000. (Smiles, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 214-215.)

trust. Sensitive and vain, he experienced the bitterest tortures. But his was not a nature to be easily crushed. It was no mere histrionic impudence which had carried him through the tragi-comedy in which he had borne himself with such amazing authority and self-possession, but a courage of the rarest. His failure had been due to a boundless imagination, untempered by experience, and to cynical views of life gathered from undigested booklore and from superficial observation. He had had his 'brief hour of principles unsettled, passions unrestrained, powers undeveloped, and purposes unexecuted.'¹ At first he was disposed to wring his hands and cry from the house-tops that 'all is vanity.' But very soon his native sanguineness reasserted itself, and with it his good sense and his still unspoil heart. He had gained one inestimable treasure—experience. He had acquired a knowledge of men, and, better still, a gauge of his own limitations. With swift insight he weighed both, and thus he came out of the ordeal with larger and graver views of life, and with the natural generosity of his character purged of its accidental selfishness and craftiness.

His conversion was largely helped by his return to the serenity of his home life—that 'middling-class' home life of which he had thought so slightly.² Bruised by the world he found the tenderest comfort and the most generous confidence at the hands of his father and mother and sister, and in the loyal friendship of the Austens. He appears to have seen little of them during the *Representative* adventure. His father's unworldliness, and perhaps some fear of his unsympathetic uncles, restrained his confidences. John Murray had kept Isaac D'Israeli informed of much of what was going on, but had mercifully hidden from him the full circumstances of the *débâcle*. Bloomsbury Square and Guildford Street thought that Benjamin had been badly treated, and Isaac even contemplated publishing a pamphlet in vindication of his stricken son.³ Sharon Turner intervened, with a significant hint

¹ *Virian Grey*, vol. i, pp. 236-237.

² *Ibid.* vol. i, p. 23.

that 'Murray will be driven to answer,' and that the result might be that his son's name would be dimmed even in his own eyes, and the pamphlet was not published. Nevertheless, the father remained unconvinced. It is not difficult to see how this unquestioning trust must have touched the sensitive heart and uneasy conscience of the returned prodigal. He began to feel the efficacy of his father's altruist philosophy, and he resolved to be worthy of it. He determined, too, to show John Murray that he was not all 'excitement and importunity,' and his first step should be to clear off his indebtedness—some £150—to the irate publisher by his own exertions.

But how? Here Sara Austen seems to have come to his aid in the most effective way. Benjamin still had his pen, and he now had a real story to tell—a story founded in solid experience, in profound spiritual suffering, in a great moral lesson learnt by the masculine conquest of self. Mrs. Austen, on her side, had a publisher ready to hand, and—what was still more valuable—a friendly mentor who knew the great world in which her pet moth had singed his gaudy wings, and who, in spite of the gravity of his years, was one with Benjamin in his devotion to her. Both were clients of her husband. The publisher was Henry Colburn, then at the outset of his successful career as the Mæcenæ of society novelists; the friend was the Hon. Robert Ward, afterwards known as Plumer Ward, a personal friend of Canning,¹ an ex-Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and present novel writer, whose anonymous romance, *Tremaine*, had been placed in Colburn's hands by Mrs. Austen, and was then the talk of the town.² So it was settled that Disraeli should write a novel, not, as he had once thought, to compel the world to recognise his masterful genius, for he now looked forward only to the life of a disenchanted recluse,

¹ Stapleton, *Some Correspondence of George Canning*, vol. ii. pp. 313-314, 300.

² It is interesting to note, in view of Disraeli's racial origin, that Plumer Ward was also of Jewish extraction. His mother was Miss Rebecca Raphael of Gibraltar.

but to enable him to pay his debts and to win back the ground he had lost in the esteem of his friends. Of great hopes he had none, but he felt that he could at least retrieve his character and free himself from debt, and with that he was disposed to be content. It is a curious coincidence that while he was thus working to pay a comparatively trumpery printer's bill, for which he was not morally responsible, his late host at Abbotsford, involved in liabilities on a thousandfold greater scale, was entering on his heroic struggle to discharge the obligations of his publishers, for which he also was not morally responsible—that struggle which is one of the epics of literary history.

These were the circumstances in which the novel of *Vivian Grey* was conceived and written. The scheme of the work—in the true romantic sense it had no plot—was speedily settled. A slightly transfigured autobiography was all that was necessary. The spoilt childhood and ill-regulated boyhood of the hero required no idealisation. For the rest, the story of Powles and the *Representative* was merely transposed to the political key. Here the origin of the masquerade adopted by Disraeli may be clearly traced to the attempted Cabal of the Duke of York and the Marquis of Hertford against Canning on the Catholic Question, which was in progress at the very time that the *Representative* was being organised, and of which Disraeli seems to have obtained some intimate knowledge.¹ In the same way as he had endeavoured to make puppets of Murray and Powles, he imagined his hero pulling all the secret strings of a powerful combination of Adullamites for his own political profit. The personal note so necessary to Colburn was supplied without an effort by bold deductions from the glimpses of distinguished people and the gossips of their less distinguished intimates which he had enjoyed during his brief reign in Albemarle Street. To Wilmot Horton he probably owed a great deal, such as, for example, the

¹ See a curious letter in Stapleton's *Correspondence of Canning*, vol. i. pp. 377-378.

conversational excursus with Cleveland about Byron in vol. ii.,¹ and perhaps a hint or two about Lady Caroline Lamb, who figures in the novel as Mrs. Felix Lorraine. As Vivian Grey was himself—that is, up to the end of 1825—so Horace Grey was his father, and Hargrave Grey his cousin Nathaniel Basevi. The originals of the literary characters were taken from the entourage of John Murray and Mrs. Austen. The Premiums were, of course, the Powles's without disguise, and the Millions and Ormolus came from the same financial set. The political portraits were largely imaginative, but that they were intended for portraits or caricatures we have Disraeli's own word. No reliance can be placed on the 'key' published at the time by the *Star Chamber*, as it was constructed to suit the puffing purposes of Colburn, but that Disraeli had drawn from life he himself twice avowed—once in a letter to Jerdan, and some years later in *Contarini Fleming*.² The visit to Cleveland in North Wales is a close parody of Disraeli's own mission to Lockhart and Scott as described in his letters to Murray. The whole work is, in short, severely autobiographical. In this its main value and interest consist, for though crisp and witty and savagely satirical, it is a poor, and in some respects a conventional romance, and a flashy and shallow picture of manners.

It is, however, not only as a clue to the externals of young Disraeli's life—his environment, his associates, and his adventures—that *Vivian Grey* is worth preserving. As an uncompromising analysis of his moral consciousness at the outset of his wonderful career, it is a biographical document of decisive importance. Nothing is more curious in the history of this book than the persistence with which it has been misunderstood. This is partly due to the fact that, during the last half century, it has always been read in the severely edited edition of

¹ Vol. i. pp. 197-199 in the present edition.

² Jerdan, *Autobiography*, vol. iv. pp. 78-79. *Contarini Fleming*, vol. ii. p. 139. See Appendix I. to present work.

1853, and partly to the spirit of political partisanship which has invariably presided over its study. Friends and foes alike have agreed that it was intended as a prefigurement of its author's political strivings; they have only differed in their valuations of the moral character of its hero, with whom, however, both have identified Disraeli in his normal state. We have already seen that the theory of ambitious prophecy is untenable, for the story was a retrospect, not an anticipation, and it was written in a moment of depression, not of high hope. Equally inaccurate is the current interpretation of its moral tendency. Mr. O'Connor, when he bids us note in the viciousness of Vivian Grey the naive outpourings of Disraeli's real subjectivity, and Mr. Hitchman, when he apologises for it as the extravagance of a brilliant and excitable young man, are alike at fault. They have both failed to note that there is a narrator as well as a hero, and that the philosophy of the one is not the philosophy of the other. And not only have they failed to note this, but they have overlooked an important passage in the first chapter of the second part, addressed to the critics of the first part and omitted in the 1853 edition, in which this distinction is made absolutely clear and the true purpose of the novel unambiguously set forth:—

‘Of the personal and political matter contained in the former books of this work, I can declare, that though written in a hasty, it was not written in a reckless spirit; and that there is nothing contained in these volumes of which I am morally ashamed. . . . Of the vices of Vivian Grey, no one is perhaps more sensible than their author. I conceived the character of a youth of great talents, whose mind had been corrupted, as the minds of many of our youth have been, by the artificial age in which he lived. The age was not less corrupted than the being it had generated. In his whole career he was to be pitied; but for his whole career he was not to be less punished. When I sketched the feelings of his early boyhood, as the novelist, I had already foreseen the results to which those feelings were to lead; and had in store

for the fictitious character the punishment which he endured. I am blamed for the affectation, the flippancy, the arrogance, the wicked wit of this fictitious character. Yet was Vivian Grey to talk like Simon Pure, and act like Sir Charles Grandison?'¹

That this apologia was not by any means an after-thought, the reader may discover for himself if he will only put away from his mind the personality and subsequent career of the author.² The story was, indeed, the record of a struggle between two standards of conduct—the selfish ambition, the unscrupulousness and cynicism of Vivian Grey, and the altruism, the self-respect, and optimism of his father. The whole moral is summed up in the letter written by Horace Grey to his son at the moment when the Carabas Cabal seemed to promise a brilliant success. Horace warns his son against the hollowness of a merely selfish ambition:—

'Is it not obvious, my dear Vivian, that true fame and true happiness must rest upon the imperishable social affections? I do not mean that coterie celebrity which paltry minds accept as fame; but that which exists independent of the opinions or the intrigues of individuals: nor do I mean that glittering show of perpetual converse with the world which some miserable wanderers call happiness; but that which can only be drawn from the sacred and solitary fountain of your own feelings.'

Of Vivian's cynical estimate of human nature his father says:—

'Let me warn you not to fall into the usual error of youth, in fancying that the circle you move in is precisely the world itself. Do not imagine that there are not other beings, whose benevolent principle is governed by finer sympathies, by more generous passions, and by those nobler emotions which really constitute all our public and private virtues. I give you this

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. p. 238.

² The intentional rascality of Vivian Grey in his first phase was well understood by Mrs. Austen and Plumer Ward, the two persons best acquainted with Disraeli's mind on the subject (see Phipps, *Memoirs of R. P. Ward*, vol. ii. p. 155).

hint, lest, in your present society, you might suppose these virtues were merely historical.'

And again there is this fine passage :—

'Man is neither the vile nor the excellent being which he sometimes imagines himself to be. He does not so much act by system as by sympathy. If this creature cannot always feel for others, he is doomed to feel for himself; and the vicious are, at least, blessed with the curse of remorse.'

• Finally comes a prophecy of failure :—

'Once more, I must beseech you not to give loose to any elation of mind. The machinery by which you have attained this unnatural result must be so complicated that in the very tenth hour you will find yourself stopped in some part where you never counted on an impediment; and the want of a slight screw or a little oil will prevent you from accomplishing your magnificent end.'¹

This prophecy is literally fulfilled in the book, not as a merely dramatic catastrophe, but as an illustration of the inevitable supremacy of Horace Grey's noble philosophy. It records a lesson which Benjamin Disraeli never forgot. Throughout his subsequent life, in politics as in literature, 'the imperishable social affections' remained his load-star. It is in this respect that *Vivian Grey* is a biographic document of such profound interest.

The book was written in a fever of impetuous and angry haste. In his retort to his critics, published in the following year, he spoke of it as 'as hot and hurried a sketch as ever yet was penned.'² The circumstances of its composition are recalled with apparent fidelity in *Contarini Fleming*, where the hero's novel *Manstein* clearly stands for the first draft of *Vivian Grey*. *Manstein*, which, like *Vivian Grey*, consisted of two volumes, was written in seven days.³ This would give an average of about 11,000 words a day—no doubt a poetic exaggeration in regard to *Vivian Grey*, but only an exaggeration.

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. pp. 182-184.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 236.

³ *Contarini Fleming*, vol. ii. p. 137 (1st edition).

There is very good reason for believing that Disraeli did not set to work until after February 14, 1826, for up to that date he was still vainly endeavouring to vindicate himself to John Murray. As the *New Monthly Magazine*, issued on April 1, announced the book as then 'on the eve of publication,' it must have been in Colburn's hands early in March. Hence its eighty odd thousand words were probably written in about three weeks. A *tour de force* of this kind is not accomplished without considerable sacrifice, and the first draft of *Vivian Grey* bore all the ugly marks of its forced growth. It was crammed with 'howlers' in taste and style. The bitterness of its author's heart found vent in the most malignant personality. Happily he had at his elbow a trusted counsellor who saved him from some of his worst imprudences. Sara Austen—of whom we have more than a mere reminiscence in the gracious character of Christiana in *Contarini Fleming*—was his chief confidante. She now became his editor. The censorial pencil could not have been more genially wielded. Sara Austen was not only full of sympathy with Disraeli's supposed grievances, but, as we may see in one of Plumer Ward's letters to her, she had no strait-laced objection to literary impertinence. On the other hand, she had a sounder knowledge of the world than her precocious protégé, she had her full share of feminine tact, and she was free from the vindictive sense of personal mortification under which Disraeli wrote. No one could have been better qualified to bring out the best characteristics of *Vivian Grey* and to attenuate its blemishes. She laboured at her task so self-denyingly, that Plumer Ward thought she had an actual partnership in the conception and composition of the novel. Every day Disraeli brought a fresh instalment of the MS. to Guildford Street and read it over to her. She criticised and corrected it and then made a clean copy of it. The whole work was in her devoted handwriting when finally she trotted down to New Burlington Street with the

MS. in her reticule, and announced to Colburn that she had another clever book for him which was certain to prove as successful as *Tremaine*.¹

Colburn needed no persuasion to accept the novel. His Barnumesque instinct recognised at once that it possessed all the elements of a society sensation. Hostile critics afterwards protested that it owed all its success to Colburn's shameless puffery. That it was impudently 'boomed' is beyond question, but Colburn was far too shrewd a man of business to use the elaborate puffing machinery he had organised on worthless merchandise. It was his trade to cater for the fashionable world, and *Vivian Grey* with its caustic reminiscences of fashionable personages, and its reckless satire of current social and political events was pre-eminently calculated to set fashionable tongues wagging, provided that fashionable curiosity could be sufficiently whetted to run after it. This was not a difficult task for Colburn. He had many loquacious friends and a good half-dozen widely-read periodicals more or less under his thumb. He was owner of the *New Monthly Magazine*, part proprietor of the *Literary Gazette*, and interested in the *Sunday Times*. Theodore Hook had found him a generous publisher, and consequently the columns of *John Bull* were entirely at his service. All these publications soon began to drop mysterious hints about the wonderful society novel that was about to see the light. One day Cyrus Redding dropped in at New Burlington Street for a chat with Colburn. 'By-the-bye,' said the watchful publisher, 'I have a capital book coming out—*Vivian Grey*. The authorship is a great secret—a man of high fashion—very high—keeps the first society. I can assure you it is a most piquant and spirited work, quite sparkling.'² This was the note of all the preliminary puffs. 'It is understood' said the *New Monthly*, 'that nearly all the individuals at present figuring in fashionable society are made to

¹ *Quarterly Review*, July 1889, p. 10.

² Redding, *Fifty Years' Recollections*, p. 322.

flourish with different degrees of favour in the pages of the new novel.' *John Bull* assured its readers that the hero of the coming book was 'insidious, daring, decisive, anything but insipid.' The *Globe* opined that 'probably there will scarcely be a single assembly of *haut ton*, public or private, from which *Vivian Grey* will be absent.' The *Sunday Times* and *Bell's Weekly* held out the promise of 'a political Don Juan,' borrowing the phrase from one of Vivian Grey's own soliloquies. In this allusive strain the newspapers and magazines bombarded the public without intermission for fully five weeks. Towards the end of April the printers and binders had given their finishing touches to the book, and in two neat octavo volumes, mysteriously anonymous, 'Vivian Grey' made his bow to the expectant world.

Meanwhile Colburn had conceived the idea of founding a new journal—a sort of weekly *Vivian Grey* in which current events in the fashionable world should be treated in the style of flippant personality which had so attracted him in Disraeli's novel. Under the title of the *Star Chamber*, the first number appeared on April 19.¹ It is necessary to notice this publication here, because it has been said that Disraeli edited it, that he wrote the larger part of it—especially a satire called 'The Dunciad of To-day'—and even that the main object of its brief existence was to puff *Vivian Grey*. These statements have been repeated so often that they have taken a place among the accepted facts of Disraelite biography. Nevertheless their accuracy is very doubtful. Their sponsors urge that Lord Beaconsfield never denied them. That this is not strictly true will be shown presently, but, at any rate, it is certain that he never admitted them. The whole story of his connection with the *Star Chamber* rests in the last resort on the authority of the *Literary Magnet*, a rival to the *Literary Gazette*, which pursued every venture of Colburn with malignant scurrility; but even the *Magnet* confessed that it generalised from internal

¹ See *infra*, Appendix II.

evidence, and it is certain that this evidence tells both ways.¹ That Disraeli had something to do with the *Star Chamber* is, perhaps, true. The moment of its publication and the style of much of its contents are coincidences not easily explained otherwise. But there is good reason to believe that he did not edit it, and it is certain that he never wrote the 'Dunciad of To-day,' and that the journal was not chiefly employed in puffing *Vivian Grey*.

The theory that he edited it is negatived by the internal evidence of its own review of *Vivian Grey*, in which the author is severely taken to task for his bad taste in 'celebrating the sorrows or the crimes of a living female'—Lady Caroline Lamb. Whatever else Disraeli might have written by way of giving an air of independence to the criticisms of the *Star Chamber*, he is not likely to have levelled at himself, or permitted anybody else to level at him, so disagreeable a reproach as that of having lampooned a weak and helpless woman. As for the authorship of the 'Dunciad,' he denied it with sufficient explicitness in his much neglected retort to his critics in the second part of *Vivian Grey*.

'As to the various *satires in verse*, and political and dramatic articles of unsuccessful newspapers, which have been fastened, with such lavish liberality, upon myself, or upon another individual as the supposed author of this work, inasmuch as *I never wrote one single line of them*, neither of the articles *nor of the satires*, it is unnecessary for me to apologise for their contents.'²

The reference here is clearly to the *Star Chamber* and the *Representative*, upon which his hostile critics had harped with merciless rancour. We know now that in regard to the *Representative* this repudiation is true, and it is impossible to doubt that it is equally true of the *Star Chamber*. The further allegation that the main object of the *Star Chamber* was to puff *Vivian Grey* is not less ill-founded. As a matter of fact it contained no

¹ *Literary Magnet*, vol. ii. (1826) pp. 103 *et seq.*

² *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. pp. 237-238.

more puffery of this kind than the *Sunday Times* or *John Bull*, and very much less than the *Literary Gazette*. True, it published a so-called 'key' to *Vivian Grey*, but this was in the vein of its *métier*, and it is unlikely, from what we now know of the book, that Disraeli had anything to do with it. Indeed, when Jerdan asked him on behalf of Colburn to supply a key to the second part, he indignantly declared that from him the conjectures of the public should 'receive neither denial nor confirmation.'¹ It wants very little insight to perceive that every line of the published key is flagrant with the puffing genius of Colburn.

Within a very few days of its publication *Vivian Grey* was the talk of the town. It was read and discussed everywhere, although it had to compete with Sir Walter Scott's *Woodstock* and Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, both published in the same week. Its cleverness was universally recognised, and where it did not evoke admiration it excited the profoundest and bitterest resentment, which was just as valuable from the publisher's point of view. The newspapers published reviews of it on a scale rarely employed for a novel. That Colburn's own publications should give a great deal of space to it was only natural, but they did not stand alone. The *London Magazine* was as diffuse as the *New Monthly*, and the *Literary Chronicle*—one of the rivals of the *Literary Gazette*—discussed it in no fewer than eleven columns, and arrived at the conclusion that it was 'decidedly the cleverest production of the class to which it belongs.' Its reception in society was not less flattering. Writing to Mrs. Austen early in May, Plumer Ward says:—

'I write this from Sir Thomas Fremantle's, where are Sir G. and Lady Nugent. All are talking of *Vivian Grey*. Its wit, raciness, and boldness are admired; and you would have been not ill-pleased with the remarks upon particular passages and characters—the dinner at Chateau Désir particularly, Mrs. Millions, all the women, the two toadies, and,

¹ Jerdan, *Autobiography*, vol. iv. p. 79; *infra*, Appendix I.

universally, Stapylton. From the Nugents' account it is much spreading in London, excites curiosity and also resentment. I observed this at Lord Maryborough's dinner on Monday, where were many public men and some fine ladies, who all admired, but a little felt the satire. In short, it will, I have no doubt, realise all your expectations of its making a considerable noise, and it is unexceptionably thought very clever. . . . It certainly frightens a great many people who expect to be shown up; and you must really be careful of discovering the author. Vivian Grey himself is abused as a hypocrite, though followed for his fascination with intense interest. If I might venture to submit anything, I would say, let the author make him more delightful by making him amiable. We cannot make out Mrs. F. Lorraine and some others. The Marchioness is capital, Lord Altamont is thought Lord Nugent. In short you have set everybody a-guessing. The lighter follies are admirably well lashed.'

And again a few days later :—

'Since I saw you I have been at dinner at Lord Gifford's and another at Sir Henry Hardinge's, at both of which there was much of the *beau monde* as well as graver characters, bishops, and judges. *Vivian Grey* was amply talked of. The opinions, as a work, were various; but all agreed none but a very clever person could write it, and equally as to its powers of amusing. The universal judgment was that "it was too impertinent and took too many liberties," which, perhaps, will not very much distress the authors. It is certainly more and more read, as, no doubt, its continuation will be.'¹

Plumer Ward was not wrong in saying that everybody had been 'set a-guessing' as to the originals of the characters in *Vivian Grey*. Colburn had skilfully set the game in motion in his preliminary puffs, and it no doubt helped very largely to stimulate public interest in the book. There was, however, another mystery upon which the New Burlington Street gang harped with scarcely less effect. Who was the author—the 'New Unknown' as he came to be called in distinction from the mysterious

¹ Phipps, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 147 *et seq.*

‘Author of *Waverley*’? Dozens of romantic females were dying to know him, while scores of irate public men were on the war-path after him with horse-whips and pistols. The *Star Chamber*, *John Bull*, and the *Globe* kept this speculation agog with sly zeal. Croker, Theodore Hook, Lockhart, Dr. Maginn, Sir Roger Gresley, Anthony Ashley (son of the Earl of Shaftesbury), and Plumer Ward were each in turn suggested to the public as the culprit. Lord Glengall is said to have confessed to it, and Lord Normanby—‘scribbling, prattling Henry Phipps’—spent no inconsiderable portion of his leisure in assuring the papers and his friends that he had nothing to do with it. The intensity with which this question was discussed was amusingly satirised by the *London Magazine*:—

‘The process to which the (suspected) names are subjected in weighing the probabilities for and against the authorship of their bearers reminds one of the game which young ladies play on the letters of the alphabet, loving their loves with an A for one sufficient reason and hating them with a B for another quite as unanswerable. Theodore Hook is the author of *Vivian Grey* because there is a great deal of talk of ‘good society’ in it; and Mr. Croker is the author of *Vivian Grey* because there is much ill-nature in it; and Mr. Lockhart is the author of *Vivian Grey* because there is much champagne and hock and seltzer water in it; and Dr. Maginn is the author of *Vivian Grey* because there is a familiar intimacy with all the blackguard publications of the age in it. Again Mr. Theodore Hook is not the author because there is a sour misanthropy in it; and Mr. Croker is not the author because a good word is given to somebody in it; and Mr. Lockhart is not the author because there is a town-air about it; and Dr. Maginn is not the author because there is no broad humour or piquant verses in it. Now each of the reasons in its turn, is convincing to our minds; and thus distracted by equal claims, we find it impossible to give one of these worthies the preference over the others.’¹

It was not long before the mystery was revealed.

¹ *London Magazine*, June 1826, pp. 207 et. seq.

The universal gossip about the book and its 'thumping sale,' as 'Christopher North' scornfully called it, were gall and wormwood to many people—to those who imagined they had been satirised in it, or who honestly suspected an element of charlatanerie in it, or who less worthily envied Colburn his success with it. The ordinary methods of literary criticism offered but a poor vehicle for the expression of the wrath and spite of these people. Nothing short of slashing abuse and personal calumny would satisfy them, and so it came about that *Vivian Grey* soon found itself the object of a series of newspaper attacks, which, for studied malignity, have few parallels in literary criticism. The chief offenders were, of course, the *Literary Magnet* and the *Monthly Magazine*, both publications which had felt the competition of Colburn's resourceful enterprise. The *Magnet* not only tore the mask from the 'New Unknown' and declared him to be 'Mr. D'Israeli, junior,' but even published a so-called *Secret History of Tremaine and Vivian Grey*, in which Mrs. Austen was roundly charged with practising a fraud on Colburn, and Disraeli himself not obscurely accused of stealing and transcribing for the purposes of his book a private diary belonging to Plumer Ward. Then after a few genial charges of vulgar blackmail and mendacious poltroonery, came the familiar revelations of Disraeli's alleged connection with the *Star Chamber* and the *Representative*.¹ How irresponsible and ill-informed was all this malicious gossip is shown by the references to the *Representative*. We know now that Disraeli's connection with John Murray was broken off before the *Representative* was published, and that during the whole of the unfortunate existence of that journal he had nothing to do with it; and yet this is what the *Magnet* permitted itself to inform the public:—

'By dint of his own assurance, and his father's acquaintance with Murray, this spark got himself appointed Editor of the *Representative*, on its first publication; everybody (and Mr.

¹ *Literary Magnet*, 1826, vol. i. pp. 1 *et. seq.*; vol. ii. pp. 129 *et. seq.*

Murray to his cost) knows with what success. . . . The first few numbers completely dispelled the illusion which had been formed respecting it. It was indeed a flourish of trumpets and enter Tom Thumb! In little more than a fortnight the *Representative* was damned past all redemption; and the editor after such a display of puppyism, ignorance, impudence and mendacity, as have seldom been exhibited under similar circumstances, was deposed amid the scoffs and jeers of the whole Metropolitan literary world.'

The *Monthly Magazine* was briefer but not less malevolent. The review was written by Dr. Croly, the author of *Salathiel*, who did not scruple to repeat the *Star Chamber* and *Representative* libels of the *Magnet*. Of *Vivian Grey* itself he expressed the opinion that it was

'immeasurably the most impudent of all feeble things, and of impudent things the most feeble; begot in puppyism, conceived in pertness and born in puffing. Whether the writer was anything above a collector of intelligence in servants' halls and billiard rooms, no one, of course, could tell, for no one had ever heard his name before; but the graces of a tavern waiter and the knowledge of a disbanded butler, are but sorry things, after all, to trade upon; and this miserable product of self-sufficiency was received with the contempt due to its abortiveness.'¹

What form this popular 'contempt' took has already been shown by Plumer Ward's letters. Dr. Croly, indeed, manifested less than his usual insight in his ungenerous review, for he wound it up by declaring that young Disraeli's 'only chance of escaping perpetual burlesque is to content himself with sinking into total oblivion.' 'We shall probably,' he added, 'never have to mention his name again.' Prophecy is a perilous business. Twenty-two years later Dr. Croly was still writing about Disraeli with more or less acerbity in pamphlets and newspaper articles.

Tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin! is perhaps the com-

¹ *Monthly Magazine*, August 1826.

ment that most people will make on these ill-natured criticisms. One cannot expect to give hard knocks without receiving a return in kind, and Disraeli himself had not been sparing of uncharitableness in *Vivian Grey*. Nevertheless he felt these attacks keenly. The impassive Earl of later days, whose 'pluck and power of countenance' excited the wonder of Jowett, and of whom Angeli, the painter, said he 'never saw his real face, always a mask,' was then an abnormally sensitive and excitable boy. He was oppressed with the feeling that he had been deeply wronged. The ponderous calumnies of the *Magnet* and the *Monthly Magazine* tore open his half-cicatrised wounds and convinced him that he was the victim of a pitiless conspiracy. He never seems to have reflected how considerable a success he had really achieved on the other side, and how hard it might have gone with him in the hostile reviews had the real truth been known. His mortification reached its climax when *Blackwood's* published its notice of his book. He had not expected praise from the 'grave censors' of that 'great critical journal' but for contumely he was not prepared. The review of his 'paltry catchpenny' as John Wilson bluntly called his book was short but scathing. We have a reminiscence of it and its effect in the account of the review of *Manstein* by 'the great critical journal of the North of Europe' which crushed Contarini Fleming:—

'With what horror, with what blank despair, with what supreme, appalling astonishment, did I find myself, for the first time in my life, a subject of the most reckless, the most malignant, and the most adroit ridicule. I was scarified—I was scalped. They scarcely condescended to notice my dreadful satire, except to remark, in passing, that, by-the-bye, I appeared to be as ill-tempered as I was imbecile. . . . The criticism fell from my hand. A film floated over my vision, my knees trembled. I felt that sickness of heart that we experience in our first serious scrape. I was ridiculous. It was time to die.'¹

¹ *Contarini Fleming*, vol. ii. pp. 182-184 (1st edition).

It was the final blow to a highly strung temperament already worn out by twelve months of incessant excitement, anxiety and hard mental labour. The morbid fancy that he was dogged by the ghost of the *Representative* and that he had failed for a second time grew upon him and he became ill. The doctors ordered him rest and confined him to a darkened room. When he became convalescent, they prescribed for him a complete change of scene. The Austens, ever his good fairies, made up the recipe by taking him for a three months' tour through France, Switzerland and Italy.

It was during this calm and soothing holiday that he wrote the larger part of the concluding three volumes of *Vivian Grey*. Before he left London he revised the first volumes for a third edition, omitting several passages which had excited the most savage ridicule of his critics, among them the gambol with the Italian greyhound (*infra*, vol. i. pp. 204 *et seq.*). The work was completed on his return in November under Mrs. Austen's watchful eye in Guildford Street, and towards the end of the following month Colburn's paragraphists were once more busy preparing the ground for a renewal of the sensation of the spring. 'The continuation of *Vivian Grey*,' said the *New Monthly Magazine*, 'will speedily appear. The author will not be turned from the career of his humour by the pitiful snarlings which have lately wounded him.'¹ 'Curiosity is highly excited,' declared the *Globe* 'respecting the contents of the forthcoming volumes of this piquant work.' *John Bull* in the old vein of snobbish scandal-mongering prophesied a further 'excitement of public interest by the introduction under fictitious names of personages who will be easily recognised as resemblances of living originals by all who are familiar with high life.'

Vivian Grey was, however, strangely altered since

¹ It is none the less a fact that he had already regretted much that had given rise to these 'pitiful snarlings.' This is shown by the changes he introduced into the third edition (1827). As early as February 1829, he described Part I. of *Vivian Grey* as a 'juvenile indiscretion' in a letter to Bulwer Lytton (*Life of Lord Lytton*, vol. ii. p. 316).

he first burst on the public in the previous April. Style, manner, story, atmosphere, all were completely changed. In the first part Disraeli had exhausted the *roman vécu*. His story of the fall and punishment of Vivian Grey was minutely autobiographical and had been brought closely down to date. Hence in the second part, in which he dealt with the repentance of Vivian Grey, he was compelled to seek his narrative setting and dramatic illustrations in the more conventional materials of fiction. The result was that instead of a squib he produced a romance. The satirist gave way to the larger purpose of the artist and philosopher. The style, too, was more *soigné*, the manner more subdued and chastened. Written at leisure and in the instructive light of the lacerating criticisms of the first two volumes, it marked a great advance in literary treatment.

The scene was laid in the Rhineland where Disraeli had spent his autumn holiday in 1824. The tortured soul of Vivian Grey could not have been supplied with a more appropriate setting. What Disraeli's powers of observation were at this early age is strikingly illustrated by the fidelity of his descriptions of the Rhine country and its picturesque society and by the success with which he had caught, during a few weeks' tour, all its romantic, bizarre, and semi-mystical spirit. The whole treatment is admirable. The characters are no longer mordant sketches but brilliant studies full of individuality and life. If occasionally we have touches of the old extravagance, as in the eccentricities of Beckendorff, they are fully atoned for by such careful portraits as those of Madame Carolina, Baron von Königstein and his associates, the Prince of Little Lilliput and Dr. von Spittergen and his daughter, Melinda. These aspects of *Vivian Grey* were little appreciated in England, but in Germany they found a ready recognition. The gifted Prince of Pückler-Muskau, who was in England at the time, devoted a large part of one of his letters to his sister to *Vivian Grey*.

'As the grave and the gay, the tragic and the frivolous,

shake hands here below, a very curious novel divides attention with the great calamity [the death of Canning]. It is remarkable for its rather *baroque*, but often witty and faithful delineations of continental manners. The description of a ball at Ems is stinging. . . . I have met with few descriptions which have amused me more.’¹

In dramatic treatment, too, the story, while unsymmetrical, was full of fascinating merit. As one of Disraeli’s objects in the first part of *Vivian Grey* was to show John Murray that he was no mere plausible trickster, so in the second part he set out to prove to his critics that he could do something better than cater for Colburn’s market for satirical personalities—better than what John Wilson had contemptuously called his ‘paltry catchpenny’; that, in short, he had imagination, creative power and high moral purpose. In this he succeeded.

From the biographical point of view, the second part of *Vivian Grey* is chiefly valuable for its accentuation of the moral lesson of the first part, and for its deepened spirit of misanthropy. We trace a fresh stage in the growing seriousness of its author, none the less interesting because, in a measure, it leads to a moral *cul de sac*. It is clear from the opening chapter that while Disraeli bitterly resented the ‘foul scurrility, over-wrought malice, ludicrous passion, evident mendacity and frantic feebleness’ of the ‘midwives of calumny,’² who had assailed him in the *Literary Magnet*, the *Monthly Magazine* and *Blackwood’s*, he was scarcely less disappointed at the failure of even his friendly reviewers to perceive that there was an ethical purpose in the earlier adventures of *Vivian Grey*. In the sequel he took care that this was no longer left in doubt, although most of his fashionable readers still insisted upon looking at the book on its personal side. *Vivian Grey* was now pictured as a grave penitent, tortured by remorse and punished by ill-luck, holding aloof from the corruption of the world and only

¹ Pückler-Muskau, *Tour in England*, vol. iv. p. 19.

² *Vivian Grey*, vol. i. pp. 237-238.

seeking to utilise such opportunities as were afforded him by his accidental contact with men and women, to lend a helping hand to virtue in its perennial struggle with vice. The theme is developed with considerable power and illustrated with much dramatic effectiveness. Those who complain of the wildness and inconclusiveness of the story, *quâ* story, fail to perceive how completely this purpose dominates the literary presentment, thus leading its author to a nervous permutation of loosely knit incident and character where the more practised artist would have employed the differentiating evolution of a single plot.

The lesson is, of course, the same as was taught in the earlier volumes, though Horace Grey is no longer there to teach it. For the most part it comes from the lips of Madeleine Trevor and Beckendorff: There is more good in the world than the cynic imagines. Nothing is to be achieved by inexperience or flashy superficiality. Patience and knowledge acquired through action are the only passports to enduring success, and even then ambition is a vain thing unless it is rooted in social duty. This is the moral insisted upon throughout. The popular idea that *Vivian Grey* is a prophetic expression of its author's political ambition is even more completely discountenanced by the second part than the first. The vein of the novel is that of Ecclesiastes with an added shade of transpontine gloom. 'I have seen too much of politics,' says Vivian to the Prince of Little Lilliput, 'ever to want to meddle with them again.'¹ Even politics based on 'the imperishable social affections' no longer appeal to him. His ideal of social duty is Melinda von Spittergen's brave and wholesome devotion to her aged father, her tenants, and her farm. This was the modest frame of mind in which Benjamin Disraeli found himself at the outset of his twenty-third year!

In spite of its changed humour *Vivian Grey* again

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. ii. p. 89. In the course of the same conversation Vivian says, 'I thank Heaven daily that I have no chance of again having any connection with the political world.'

proved a popular success. The book was looked forward to with eagerness and read with avidity. If we are to believe *John Bull*, even the king 'expressed considerable curiosity to peruse the continuation of this extraordinary performance.'¹ Society oracles, applying to it the standard of the first instalment, insisted on recognising another satire—as the flunkeyish *Globe* said—'on sundry persons in high life of whose *hauts faits* the public has already had some intimation.' Colburn took care that their enterprise should not languish for want of newspaper encouragement. Paragraphs insisting on this interpretation of the new *Vivian Grey* were sown broadcast, and ultimately, in spite of Disraeli's earnest protests, another key was published, this time in the form of a pamphlet with a long introduction.² It was even more ludicrous than the first, but it suited the frivolous 'circles of fashion' for which Colburn catered, and no doubt found its justification in the brimming till of the New Burlington Street shop, for within a few months it ran through a dozen editions. Even the old and exploded trick of hinting that the identity of the author had yet to be established was once more resorted to, and Theodore Hook was put up to suggest that 'if Mr. Hope be really not the author of *Vivian Grey* as well as of *Anastasi*, the latter novel has met with a formidable rival.'³ As a matter of fact no one knew better than Hook who the author of *Vivian Grey* was.

On the other hand, the solid qualities of the new volumes were handsomely recognised by the critics. With few exceptions they welcomed the book as one which might well appeal to the reading public on its literary merits, and in this respect as far superior to the first instalment. The literary notice in *John Bull*, though

¹ *John Bull*, February 26, 1827.

² See Appendix I. In his preface to his next novel, *The Young Duke*, Disraeli repudiated in advance all idea of drawing his characters from life. 'It requires,' he wrote, 'only a small portion of talent and a great want of courtesy.'

³ *John Bull*, March 18, 1827.

somewhat vitiated by its dependence on Colburn, sums up this view of the book very fairly :—

‘The continuation of *Vivian Grey* comes recommended by qualities which prodigiously outweigh all the commoner attractions of the first two volumes, heightened as they were by the exuberant wit, the felicitous satire, and the bold and sketchy portrait-painting of their brilliant author. Combined with all the gaiety and spirit, the rapidity and variety of the first series, the continuation displays power of a much loftier order. The author’s moralising vein has more tenderness and solemnity in it, his pathos is deeper, his pictures of society are more finished, and his views of mankind and their affairs far more philosophical.’¹

In the same strain wrote the *Monthly Magazine* and the *Literary Chronicle*. The latter, indeed, went so far as to express sympathy with the outburst against the critics in the first chapter, and to acknowledge that the ‘hostility shown by various periodicals to the author of *Vivian Grey* was disgraceful.’² This avowal marks a revulsion of critical feeling far more eloquent as a tribute to the achievement of the new *Vivian Grey* than the most laudatory reviews. The scurrilous note was, of course, not wanting, although the venomous *Literary Magnet* had departed this life. We find it, for example, as bitter as ever in the *London Magazine* and the *Monthly Review*. It had, however, done its worst in the previous year. It had shot its bolt. There were no more scandalous revelations for it to make, and its *gros mots* had become contemptible by familiarity.

In short, success had at last come to young Disraeli in the form in which he had wished for it. He had compelled the world to recognise that there was something in him, and he had even silenced his noisiest detractors. His next care was to drive the lesson home in Albemarle Street, where distrust of him still found a

¹ *John Bull*, April 1, 1827; see also Phipps, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pp. 152-156, for a similar opinion more elaborately expressed.

² *Literary Chronicle*, March 3, 1827.

starched and unyielding refuge. During the first fortnight in March he had a settlement of accounts with Colburn, and a few days later, on the 19th, he addressed the following letter to John Murray :—

6 BLOOMSBURY SQUARE,
March 19, 1827.

SIR—I beg to enclose you the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, which I believe to be the amount due to you for certain pamphlets published respecting the American Mining Companies, as stated in accounts sent in some time since. I have never been able to obtain a settlement of these accounts from the parties originally responsible, and it has hitherto been quite out of my power to exempt myself from the liability, which, I have ever been conscious, on their incompetency, resulted from the peculiar circumstances of the case to myself. In now enclosing you what I consider to be the amount, I beg also to state that I have fixed upon it from memory, having been unsuccessful in my endeavours to obtain even a return of the accounts from the original parties, and being unwilling to trouble you again for a second set of accounts, which had been so long and so improperly kept unsettled. In the event, therefore, of there being any mistake, I will be obliged by your clerk instantly informing me of it, and it will be as instantly rectified ; and I will also thank you to enclose me a receipt, in order to substantiate my claims and enforce my demands against the parties originally responsible. I have to express my sense of your courtesy in this business, and I am, sir, yours truly,

BENJAMIN DISRAELI.¹

The purpose of *Vivian Grey* was now triumphantly accomplished.

The subsequent history of the novel is not without bibliographical and even biographical interest. Its popularity continued for seventeen years, and Colburn considered it a sufficient passport to public favour to insist upon its name being placed on the title-pages of

¹ Smiles, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pp. 254-255.

all Disraeli's works published by him down to *Venetia*. Even in the first and second editions of *Coningsby* it was advertised with a collection of press opinions in a publisher's postscript. Only after it had been displaced as a *roman politique* by the maturer qualities of the famous Trilogy did Disraeli succeed in getting it to some extent ignored. In his preface to the 1853 edition he states that for a quarter of a century he had refused to reprint it owing to its youthful defects.¹ It is more probable that his distaste for it arose from the circumstance that its pessimist view of life had ceased to respond to the development of his own psychology. His father's refusal to help him in immuring himself in the life of a country gentleman² threw him back into the busy world where his social success restimulated his sanguineness and reawoke his political ambitions. In these circumstances one can understand that he began to wish *Vivian Grey* forgotten.

American pirates and foreign translators, however, rendered the gratification of this desire impossible, and when, in 1853, after his first short-lived leadership of the House of Commons, a demand arose for a collected edition of his novels and tales, he found himself compelled to grapple once for all with the problem of whether or not he should finally acknowledge his first bantling. The decision at which he arrived was in the nature of a compromise. While pleading to the public for 'an indulgent recollection of the conditions under which it was produced,' and frankly declaring that the work was only 'a kind of literary *lusus*,'³ he submitted it to a severe process of Bowdlerisation. How far-reaching this revision was is attested by the notes to the present edition, where

¹ In his preface to his collected works there is a curious slip on this subject: he says, 'what my opinion was of that, my first work, was shown by my publishing my second anonymously.' Lord Beaconsfield here forgets *The Young Duke* and *Popanilla*, both of which were published as by 'the author of *Vivian Grey*.' The anonymous novel was *Contarini Fleming*, but the reason of its anonymity had nothing to do with *Vivian Grey* (see Smiles, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pp. 332-340).

² *Quarterly Review*, July 1889, p. 16.

³ Preface to 1853 edition.

all the chief omissions are indicated. From private letters in the possession of the present editor it appears that the work of purification was performed by Disraeli's gifted and little-known sister, Sarah, who had succeeded Sara Austen as his literary monitor, and had already done a great deal of work—notably the editing of the collected works of her father—which appeared under his name.

The 1853 edition is that by which the present generation has hitherto known *Vivian Grey*. It is crisper in action than the original, but, as a biographical document, far less satisfactory. The main tendency could, of course, be only slightly modified, but the superficial defects—the hasty judgments, the indiscretions, the affectations and the *gaucheries*—which throw so much light on the personality of Disraeli the younger were unceremoniously expelled. The style was chastened, exaggerations were pruned, interjections were deleted wholesale, and the French locutions—mostly of doubtful accuracy—were thinned. Instances of bad taste, such as the frequent 'your ladyship' addressed to Madeleine Trevor, and the recurring snobbishness of the references to 'the usages of society,' together with a whole host of naked inaccuracies, were expunged. Beckendorff's eccentricities were rendered less burlesque. We are spared, too, the bad and grating romance of the hesitation of Vivian Grey's love between Madeleine Trevor and her daughter, the ill-natured treatment of the school ushers, the grotesque caricature of Oxford graduates, the gastronomic rhapsodies, and the pretentious dissertations on art, archæology, and philosophy. It is interesting to note, too, that a few whole characters are omitted. Thus Mr. Sherborne does not reappear in 1853. The explanation is that Sherborne was believed to be a sketch of the less amiable side of the sometimes prolix and self-conscious character of Isaac D'Israeli, who had died five years before. More important is the excision of everything relating to the eccentric Dr. von Spittergen and his daughter. The modest lesson they were introduced to

teach had ceased to possess the same practical value, in a subjective sense, for Disraeli the Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, that it had for Disraeli the young lawyer's clerk, sighing amid the ruins of his virgin ambitions, 'sad and serious and wavering, uncertain of everything except his misery.'¹

To-day, eighty years since *Vivian Grey* was conceived, and twenty-four since its author passed into history with the greatest of England's sons, this pharisaical masquerade may well be cast aside. If we want to know the 'wonderful boy,' as Dr. Maginn called him,² in all his self-conscious, daring, sensitive, generous, bitter, vehement, erratic, brilliant, and withal raw, youth, we must read *Vivian Grey* in the original. His biography can only gain in human realism, and that not unsympathetically, from the study. Moreover, the true story of the book, as here set forth, is his and its best vindication. *Tout savoir, c'est tout pardonner.*

L. W.

¹ *Vivian Grey*, vol. ii. p. 215.

² *Fraser's Magazine*, May 1833, p. 602.

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VIVIAN GREY

“Why then the world’s mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open”

LONDON

1826

TO
THE BEST AND GREATEST OF MEN
I DEDICATE THESE VOLUMES.
HE, FOR WHOM IT IS INTENDED, WILL ACCEPT AND
APPRECIATE THE COMPLIMENT :
THOSE, FOR WHOM IT IS NOT INTENDED, WILL—
DO THE SAME.

PART I—BOOK THE FIRST

BOOK THE FIRST

CHAPTER I

THE CONSULTATION

I AM not aware that the infancy of Vivian Grey was distinguished by any extraordinary incident. The solicitude of the most affectionate of mothers, and the care of the most attentive of nurses, did their best to injure an excellent constitution. But Vivian was an only child, and these exertions were therefore excusable. For the first five years of his life, Master Vivian, with his curly locks and his fancy dress, was the pride of his own, and the envy of all neighbouring establishments; but, in process of time, the horrible spirit of *boyism* began to develop itself, and Vivian not only would brush his hair 'straight,' and rebel against his nurse, but actually insisted upon being — breeched! At this crisis it was discovered that he had been *spoiled*, and it was determined that he should be sent to school. Mr. Grey observed, also, that the child was nearly ten years old, and did not know his alphabet, and Mrs. Grey remarked, that he was getting very ugly. The fate of Vivian was decided.

'I am told, my dear,' observed Mrs. Grey, one day after dinner to her husband, 'I am told, my dear, that Dr. Flummery's would do very well for Vivian. Nothing can exceed the attention which is paid to the pupils. There are sixteen young ladies, all the daughters of clergymen, merely to attend to the morals and the linen — terms very moderate — 100 guineas per annum, for all under six years of age, and few extras, only for fencing,

pure milk, and the guitar. Mrs. Metcalfe has both her boys there, and she says their progress is *astonishing*! Percy Metcalfe, she assures me, was quite as backward as Vivian—ah! indeed, much backwarder; and so was Dudley Metcalfe, who was taught at home on the new system, by a pictorial alphabet, and who persisted to the last, notwithstanding all the exertions of Miss Barrett, in spelling A-P-E—monkey, merely because over the word, there was a monster munching an apple.’

‘And quite right in the child, my dear—*Pictorial* alphabet!—pictorial fool’s head!’

‘But what do you say to Flummery’s, Grey?’

‘My dear, do what you like. I never trouble myself, you know, about these matters’; and Mr. Grey refreshed himself, after this domestic attack, with a glass of claret.

Mr. Grey was a gentleman who had succeeded, when the heat of youth was over, to the enjoyment of a life-interest in an estate of about £2000 per annum. He was a man of distinguished literary abilities, and he had hailed with no slight pleasure, his succession to a fortune, which, though limited in its duration, was still a very great thing for a young *littérateur* about town; not only with no profession, but with a mind utterly unfitted for every species of business. Grey, to the astonishment of his former friends, the wits, made an excellent domestic match; and, leaving the whole management of his household to his lady, felt himself as independent in his magnificent library, as if he had never ceased to be that true freeman, A MAN OF CHAMBERS.

The young Vivian had not, by the cares which fathers are always heirs to, yet reminded his parent, that children were anything else but playthings. The intercourse between father and son was, of course, extremely limited; for Vivian was, as yet, the mother’s child; Mr. Grey’s parental duties being confined to giving his son a glass of claret *per diem*, pulling his ears with all the awkwardness of literary affection, and trusting to God ‘that the urchin would never scribble.’

‘I won’t go to school, Mamma,’ bawled Vivian.
‘But you must, my love,’ answered Mrs. Grey; ‘all good boys go to school’; and in the plenitude of a mother’s love, she tried to make her offspring’s hair curl.
‘I won’t have my hair curl, Mamma; the boys will laugh at me,’ rebawled the beauty.
‘Now who could have told the child that?’ monologised Mamma, with all a Mamma’s admiration.
‘Charles Appleyard told me so—*his* hair curled, and the boys called him *girl*. Papa! give me some more claret—I won’t go to school.’

CHAPTER II

PROGRESS

THREE or four years passed over, and the mind of Vivian Grey most astonishingly developed itself. He had long ceased to wear frills, had broached the subject of boots three or four times, made a sad inroad during the holidays in Mr. Grey’s aforesaid bottle of claret, and was reported as having once sworn at the footman. The young gentleman began also to hint, during every vacation, that the fellows at Flummery’s were somewhat too small for his companionship, and (first bud of puppyism!) the former advocate of straight hair, now expended a portion of his infant income in the purchase of Macassar oil, and began to cultivate his curls. Mrs. Grey could not entertain for a moment, the idea of her son’s associating with children, the eldest of whom (to adopt his own account) was not above eight years old; so Flummery’s, it was determined, he should leave. But where to go? Mr. Grey wished Eton, but his lady was one of those women, whom nothing in the world can persuade that a public school is anything else but a place where boys are roasted alive; and so with tears, and taunts, and supplications, the point of private education was conceded. As for

Vivian himself, he was for Eton, and Winchester, and Harrow, and Westminster, all at once ; the only point that he made was, ‘not Rugby, it was so devilish blackguard.’

At length it was resolved that *the only hope* should remain at home a season, until some plan should be devised for the cultivation of his promising understanding. During this year, Vivian became a somewhat more constant intruder into the library than heretofore ; and living so much among books, he was insensibly attracted to those silent companions, that speak so eloquently.

How far the character of the parent may influence the character of the child, I leave the metaphysician to decide. Sure I am, that the character of Vivian Grey underwent, at this period of his life, a sensible, a prodigious change. Doubtless, constant communion with a mind highly refined, severely cultivated, and much experienced, cannot but produce a most beneficial impression, even upon a mind formed, and upon principles developed : how infinitely more powerful must the influence of such communion be upon a youthful heart, ardent, innocent, and inexperienced ! As Vivian was not to figure in the microcosm of a public school, a place for which, from his temper, he was almost better fitted than any young genius whom the ‘playing fields’ of Eton, or ‘the hills’ of Winton, can remember ; there was some difficulty in fixing upon his future Academus. Mr. Grey’s two axioms were, first, that no one so young as his son should settle in the metropolis, and that Vivian must consequently not have a private tutor ; and, secondly, that all private schools were quite worthless ; and, therefore, there was every probability of Vivian not receiving any education whatever.

At length, an exception to axiom second started up in the establishment of the Reverend Everard Dallas. This gentleman was a clergyman of the Church of England, a profound Grecian, and a poor man. He had edited the *Alcestis*, and married his lady—lost money by his edition, and his fellowship by his match.

In a few days, the hall of Mr. Grey's London mansion was filled with all sorts of portmanteaus, trunks, and travelling cases, directed in a boy's sprawling hand to 'Vivian Grey, Esquire, at the Reverend Everard Dallas, Burnsley Vicarage, Hants.'

'God bless you, my boy! write to your mother soon, and remember your Journal.'

CHAPTER III

PRIVATE EDUCATION

THE rumour of the arrival of 'a new fellow,' circulated with rapidity through the inmates of Burnsley Vicarage, and about fifty young devils were preparing to quiz the newcomer, when the school-room door opened, and Mr. Dallas, accompanied by Vivian, entered.

'A dandy, by Jove!' whispered St. Leger Smith. 'What a knowing set out!' squeaked Johnson *secundus*. 'Mammy-sick!' growled Barlow *primus*. This last exclamation was, however, a most scandalous libel, for certainly no being ever stood in a pedagogue's presence with more perfect sangfroid, and with a bolder front, than did, at this moment, Vivian Grey.

One principle in Mr. Dallas' *regime*, was always to introduce a newcomer in school-hours. He was thus carried immediately *in medias res*, and the curiosity of his co-mates being in a great degree satisfied, at a time when that curiosity could not personally annoy him, the newcomer was, of course, much better prepared to make his way, when the absence of the ruler became a signal for *some moral communication* with 'the arrival.'

However, in the present instance the young savages at Burnsley Vicarage had caught a Tartar; and in a very few days Vivian Grey was decidedly the most popular fellow in the school. He was 'so dashing! so

devilish good-tempered ! so completely up to everything !' The magnates of the land were certainly rather jealous of his success, but their very sneers bore witness to his popularity. 'Cursed puppy,' whispered St. Leger Smith. 'Thinks himself knowing,' squeaked Johnson *secundus*. 'Thinks himself witty,' growled Barlow *primus*.

Notwithstanding this cabal, days rolled on at Burnsley Vicarage only to witness the increase of Vivian's popularity. Although more deficient than most of his own age in accurate classical knowledge, he found himself in talents, and various acquirements, immeasurably their superior. And singular is it, that at school, distinction in such points is ten thousand times more admired by the multitude, than the most profound knowledge of Greek Metres, or the most accurate acquaintance with the value of Roman coins. Vivian Grey's English verses, and Vivian Grey's English themes, were the subject of universal commendation. Some young lads made copies of these productions, to enrich, at the Christmas holidays, their sisters' albums ; while the whole school were scribbling embryo prize-poems, epics of twenty lines on 'the Ruins of Pæstum,' and 'the Temple of Minerva' ; 'Agrigentum,' and 'the Cascade of Terni.'—I suppose that Vivian's productions at this time would have been rejected by the commonest twopenny publication about town—yet they turned the brain of the whole school ; while fellows who were writing Latin Dissertations, and Greek Odes which might have made the fortune of the Classical Journal, were looked on by the multitude as as great dunderheads as themselves :—and such is the advantage which, even in this artificial world, everything that is genuine has over everything that is false and forced. The dunderheads who wrote 'good Latin,' and 'Attic Greek,' did it by a process, by means of which, the youngest fellow in the school was conscious he could, if he chose, attain at the same perfection. Vivian Grey's verses were unlike anything

which had yet appeared in the Literary Annals of Burnsley Vicarage, and that which was quite novel was naturally thought quite excellent.

There is no place in the world where greater homage is paid to talent than at an English school. At a public school, indeed, if a youth of great talents is blessed with an amiable and generous disposition, he ought not to envy the minister of England. If any captain of Eton, or præfect of Winchester, is reading these pages, I would most earnestly entreat him dispassionately to consider, in what situation of life he can rationally expect that it will be in his power to exercise such influence, to have such opportunities of obliging others, and be so confident of an *affectionate* and *grateful return*. Ay, there's the rub! —Bitter, bitter thought! that gratitude should cease the moment we become men.

And sure I am, that Vivian Grey was loved as ardently, and as faithfully, as you might expect from innocent young hearts. His slight accomplishments were the standard of all perfection; his sayings were the soul of all good fellowship; and his opinion, the guide in any crisis which occurred in the monotonous existence of the little commonwealth. And time flew gaily on.

One winter evening, as Vivian, with some of his particular cronies, were standing round the schoolroom fire, they began, as all schoolboys do when it grows rather dark, and they grow rather sentimental—to talk of HOME.

'Twelve weeks more,' said Augustus Etherege—'twelve weeks more, and we are free! The glorious day should be celebrated.'

'A feast, a feast!' exclaimed Poynings.

'A feast is but the work of a night,' said Vivian Grey: 'something more stirring for me! What say you to private theatricals?'

The proposition was, of course, received with enthusiasm, and it was not until they had unanimously agreed *to act*, that they universally remembered that acting was

not allowed. And then they consulted whether they should ask Dallas, and then they remembered that Dallas had been asked fifty times, and then they 'supposed they must give it up'; and then Vivian Grey made a proposition which the rest were secretly sighing for, but which they were afraid to make themselves—he proposed that they should act without asking Dallas.—'Well, then, we'll do it without asking him,' said Vivian;—'Nothing's allowed in this life, and everything is done:—in town there's a thing called the French play, and that's not allowed, yet my aunt has got a private box there. Trust me for acting—but what shall we perform?'

This question was, as usual, the fruitful source of jarring opinions. One proposed *Othello*, chiefly because it would be so easy to black a face with a burnt cork. Another was for *Hamlet*, solely because he wanted to act the ghost, which he proposed doing in white shorts, and a night-cap. A third was for *Julius Cæsar*, because the murder scene 'would be *such* fun.'

'No! no!' said Vivian, tired at these various and varying proposals, 'this will never do. Out upon Tragedies; let's have a Comedy!'

'A Comedy! a Comedy!—oh!—how delightful!'

CHAPTER IV

PRIVATE THEATRICALS

AFTER an immense number of propositions, and an equal number of repetitions, Dr. Hoadley's bustling drama was fixed upon. Vivian was to act *Ranger*, Augustus Etherege was to personate *Clarinda*, because he was a fair boy and always blushing; and the rest of the characters found able representatives. Every half-holiday was devoted to rehearsals, and nothing could exceed the amusement and thorough fun which all the preparations elicited. All went well—Vivian wrote

a most pathetic Prologue, and a most witty Epilogue. Etheridge got on capitally in the mask scene, and Poynings was quite perfect in Jack Meggot. There was, of course, some difficulty in keeping all things in order, but then Vivian Grey was such an excellent manager! and then, with infinite tact, the said manager conciliated the *classiques*, for he allowed St. Leger Smith to select a Greek motto,—from the *Andromache*, if I remember right,—for the front of the theatre; and Johnson *secundus* and Barlow *primus* were complimented by being allowed to act the chairmen.

But, alas! in the midst of all this sunshine, the seeds of discord and dissension were fast flourishing. Mr. Dallas himself was always so absorbed in some freshly imported German commentator, that it was a fixed principle with him never to trouble himself with anything that concerned his pupils, ‘out of school hours.’ The consequence was, that certain powers were necessarily delegated to a certain set of beings called *USHERS*. In the necessity of employing this horrible race of human beings, consists, in a great measure, the curse of what is called, *private education*. Those, who, in all the fulness of parental love, guard their offspring from the imagined horrors of a public school, forget that, in having recourse to ‘an Academy for Young Gentlemen,’ they are necessarily placing their children under the influence of *blackguards*; it is of no use to mince the phrase—such is the case. And is not the contagion of these fellows’ low habits and loose principles much more to be feared and shunned, than a system, in which, certainly, greater temptations are offered to an imprudent lad; but under whose influence boys usually become gentlemanly in their habits and generous in their sentiments?

The usherian rule had, however, always been comparatively light at Burnsley Vicarage, for the good Dallas never, for a moment, entrusting the duties of tuition to a third person, engaged these deputies merely as a sort of police, to regulate the bodies, rather than the minds, of

his youthful subjects. One of the first principles of the new theory introduced into the establishment of Burnside Vicarage by Mr. Vivian Grey, was, that the ushers were to be considered by the boys as a species of upper servants; were to be treated with civility, certainly, as all servants are by gentlemen; but that no further attention was to be paid them, and that any fellow voluntarily conversing with an usher, was to be *cut dead* by the whole school. This pleasant arrangement was no secret to those whom it most immediately concerned, and, of course, rendered Vivian rather a favourite with them. These men, who were sufficiently vulgars, had not the tact to conciliate the boy by a little attention, and were both, notwithstanding, too much afraid of his influence in the school to attack him openly; so they waited with that patience which insulted beings can alone endure.

One of these creatures must not be forgotten; his name was Mallett; he was a perfect specimen of the genuine usher. The monster wore a black coat and waistcoat; the residue of his costume was of that mysterious colour known by the name of pepper-and-salt. He was a pallid wretch with a pug nose, white teeth, and marked with the small-pox; and long greasy black hair; and small black, beady eyes. This dæmon watched the progress of the theatrical company with eyes gloating with vengeance. No attempt had been made to keep the fact of the rehearsal a secret from the police; no objection, on their part, had as yet been made; the twelve weeks diminished to six; Ranger had secretly ordered a dress from town, and was to get a steel-handled sword from Fentum's for Jack Meggot; and everything was proceeding with the most delightful success, when one morning, as Mr. Dallas was apparently about to take his departure, with a volume of Becker's Thucydides under his arm, the respected Dominie stopped, and thus harangued: 'I am informed that a great deal is going on in this family, with which it is intended that I shall be kept unacquainted. It is not my intention to name any-

body, or anything at present; but I must say that of late the temper of this family has sadly changed. Whether there be any *seditions stranger* among you or not, I shall not at present even endeavour to discover; but I will warn my *old* friends of their *new* ones'; and so saying, the Dominie withdrew.

All eyes were immediately fixed on Vivian, and the faces of the *Classiques* were triumphant with smiles; those of the manager's particular friends, the *Romantiques*, we may call them, were clouded; but who shall describe the countenance of Mallett? In a moment the school broke up with an agitated and tumultuous uproar. 'No stranger!' shouted St. Leger Smith; 'No stranger!' vociferated a prepared gang. Vivian's friends were silent, for they hesitated to accept for their leader the insulting title. Those, who were neither Vivian's friends, nor in the secret, weak creatures who side always with the strongest, immediately swelled the insulting chorus of Mr. St. Leger Smith. That worthy, emboldened by his success and the smiles of Mallett, contained himself no longer: 'Down with the manager!' he cried. His satellites chorussed. But now Vivian rushed forward. 'Mr. Smith, I thank you for being so definite;—take that!' and he struck Smith with such force that the Cleon staggered and fell; but Smith instantly recovered, and a ring was as instantly formed. To a common observer, the combatants were most unequally matched; for Smith was a burly, big-limbed animal, alike superior to Grey in years and strength. But Vivian, though delicate in frame, and more youthful, was full his match in spirit, and, thanks to being a Cockney! ten times his match in science. He had not built a white greatcoat, nor drunk blue ruin at Ben Burn's for nothing!

Oh! how beautifully he fought! how admirably straight he hit! and his stops quick as lightning! and his followings up confounding his adversary with their painful celerity! Smith, alike puzzled and punished, yet proud in his strength, hit round, and wild, and false, and

foamed like a furious elephant. For ten successive rounds the result was dubious ; but in the eleventh the strength of Smith began to fail him, and the men were more fairly matched. 'Go it ! Ranger !—go it, Ranger !' halloed the Greyites ; 'No stranger !—no stranger !' eagerly bawled the more numerous party. 'Smith's floored, by Jove !' exclaimed Poynings, who was Grey's second. 'At it again ! at it again !' exclaimed all. And now, when Smith must certainly have given in, suddenly stepped forward Mr. Mallett, accompanied by—— Dallas ! 'How, Mr. Grey ! No answer, Sir ; I understand that you have always an answer ready. I do not quote Scripture lightly, Mr. Grey ; but "Take heed that *you* offend not, even with your tongue."

When Vivian Grey again joined his companions, he found himself almost universally shunned. Etherege and Poynings were the only individuals who met him with their former frankness. 'A horrible row, Grey,' said the latter. 'After you went, the Doctor harangued the whole school, and swears you have seduced and ruined us all :—everything was happiness until you came, etc. Mallett is of course at the bottom of the whole business : but what can we do ? Dallas says you have the tongue of a serpent, and that he will not trust himself to hear your defence. Infamous shame ! I swear ! And now every fellow has got a story against you : some say you are a dandy—others want to know, whether the next piece performed at your theatre will be "*The Stranger*" ;—as for myself and Etherege, we shall leave in a few weeks, and it does not signify to us ; but what the devil you're to do next half, by Jove, I can't say. If I were you, I would not return.' 'Not return, eh ! but that will I, though ; and we shall see who, in future, can complain of the sweetness of my voice ! Ungrateful fools !'

CHAPTER V

A NEW FRIEND

THE Vacation was over, and Vivian returned to Burnsley Vicarage. He bowed cavalierly to Mr. Dallas on his arrival, and immediately sauntered up into the schoolroom, where he found a tolerable quantity of wretches looking as miserable as schoolboys, who have left their pleasant homes, generally do, for some four-and-twenty hours. 'How d'ye do, Grey? How d'ye do, Grey?' burst from a knot of unhappy fellows, who would have felt quite delighted had their newly-arrived co-mate condescended to entertain them, as usual, with some capital good story fresh from town. But they were disappointed.

'We can make room for you at the fire, Grey,' said Theophilus King.

'I thank you, I am not cold.'

'I suppose you know that Poynings and Etherege don't come back, Grey?'

'Everybody knew that last half': and so he walked on.

'Grey, Grey!' halloed King, 'don't go in the dining-room; Mallett's there alone, and told us not to disturb him. By Jove, the fellow's going in: there'll be a greater row this half between Grey and Mallett, than ever.'

Days—the heavy first days of the halt, rolled on, and all the citizens of the little commonwealth had returned.

'What a dull half this will be!' said Eardley; 'how one misses Grey's set!—After all, they kept the school alive: Poynings was a first-rate fellow; and Etherege, so deuced good-natured! I wonder whom Grey will crony with this half! Have you seen him and Dallas speak together yet? He cut the Doctor quite dead at Greek to-day.'

'Why, Eardley! Eardley! there's Grey walking round playing fields with Mallett!' halloed a sawney

could be a greater failure than the first weeks of his '*course of study*.' He was perpetually violating the sanctity of the drawing-room by the presence of Scapulas and Hederics, and outraging the propriety of morning visitors by bursting into his mother's boudoir, with Lexicons and green slippers.

'Vivian, my dear,' said his father to him one day, 'this will never do: you must adopt some system for your studies, and some locality for your reading. Have a room to yourself; set apart certain hours in the day for your books, and allow no consideration on earth to influence you to violate their sacredness; and above all, my dear boy, keep your papers in order. I find a Dissertation on "The Commerce of Carthage," stuck in my large-paper copy of "Dibdin's Decameron," and an "Essay on the Metaphysics of Music" (pray, my dear fellow, beware of magazine-scribbling) cracking the back of Montfaucon's "Monarchie."'

Vivian apologised, promised, protested, and finally sat down 'TO READ.' He had laid the first foundations of accurate classical knowledge under the tuition of the learned Dallas; and twelve hours a-day, and self-banishment from society, overcame, in twelve months, the ill effects of his imperfect education. The result of this extraordinary exertion may easily be conceived. At the end of twelve months, Vivian, like many other young enthusiasts, had discovered that all the wit and wisdom of the world were concentrated in some fifty antique volumes, and he treated the unlucky moderns with the most sublime spirit of hauteur imaginable. A chorus in the *Medea*, that painted the radiant sky of Attica, disgusted him with the foggy atmosphere of Great Britain; and while Mrs. Grey was meditating a *séjour* at Brighton, her son was dreaming of the gulf of Salamis. The spectre in the *Persæ* was his only model for a ghost, and the furies in the *Orestes* were his perfection of tragical machinery.

Most ingenious and educated youths have fallen into the same error; but few, I trust, have ever carried such

feelings to the excess that Vivian Grey did ; for while his mind was daily becoming more enervated under the beautiful but baneful influence of CLASSIC REVERIE, the youth lighted upon PLATO.

Wonderful is it, that while the whole soul of Vivian Grey seemed concentrated and wrapped in the glorious pages of the Athenian,—while, with keen and almost inspired curiosity, he searched, and followed up, and meditated upon, the definite mystery, the indefinite development,—while his spirit alternately bowed in trembling and in admiration, as he seemed to be listening to the secrets of the Universe revealed in the glorious melodies of an immortal voice ;—wonderful is it, I say, that the writer, the study of whose works appeared to the young scholar, in the revelling of his enthusiasm, to be the sole object for which man was born and had his being, was the cause by which Vivian Grey was saved from being all his life a dreaming scholar.

Determined to spare no exertions, and to neglect no means, by which he might enter into the very *penetralia* of his mighty master's meaning, Vivian determined to attack the latter Platonists. These were a race of men with whom he was perfectly unacquainted, and of whose existence he knew merely by the references to their productions, which were sprinkled in the commentaries of his 'best editions.' In the pride of boyish learning, Vivian had limited his library to Classics, and the proud leaders of the later schools did not consequently grace his diminutive book-case. In this dilemma he flew to his father, and confessed by his request that his favourites were not all-sufficient.

'Father ! I wish to make myself master of the latter Platonists. I want Plotinus, and Porphyry, and Iamblichus, and Syrianus, and Maximus Tyrius, and Proclus, and Hierocles, and Sallustius, and Damascius.'

Mr. Grey stared at his son, and burst into a fit of laughter.

'My dear Vivian ! are you quite convinced that the

authors you ask for are all *pure* Platonists? or have not some of them placed the great end rather in *practical* than *theoretic* virtue, and thereby violated the first principle of your master, which would be very shocking! Are you sure, too, that these gentlemen have actually "withdrawn the sacred veil, which covers from profane eyes the luminous spectacles"? Are you quite convinced that every one of these worthies lived at least five hundred years after the great master; for I need not tell so profound a Platonist as yourself, that it was not till that period that even glimpses of the great master's meaning were discovered. Strange! that TIME should alike favour the philosophy of theory, and the philosophy of facts. Mr. Vivian Grey, benefiting, I presume, by the lapse of further centuries, is about to complete the great work which Proclus and Porphyry commenced.'

'My dear sir, you are pleased to be very amusing this morning.'

'My dear boy! I smile, but not with joy, sit down, and let us have a little conversation together. Father and son, and father and son on such terms as we are, should really communicate oftener together than we do. It has been, perhaps, *my* fault; it shall not be so again.'

'My dear sir!'

'Nay, nay, it *shall* be my fault *now*. Whose it shall be in *future*, Vivian, time will show. My dear Vivian, you have now spent upwards of a year under this roof, and your conduct has been as correct as the most rigid parent might require. I have not wished to interfere with the progress of your mind, and I regret it. I have been negligent, but not wilfully so. I *do* regret it; because, whatever may be your powers, Vivian, I at least have the advantage of *experience*. I see you smile at a word which I so often use. Well, well, were I to talk to you for ever, you would not understand what I mean by that *single word*. The time *will* come, when you will deem that *single word*—*everything*. Ardent young men in their closets, Vivian, too often fancy that they are

peculiar beings ; and I have no reason to believe that you are an exception to the general rule. In passing one whole year of your life, as you have done, you doubtless imagine that you have been spending your hours in a manner which no others have done before. Trust me, my boy, thousands have done the same ; and, what is of still more importance, thousands *are doing*, and *will do* the same. Take the advice of one who has committed as many, ay, more follies than yourself ; but who would bless the hour that he had been a fool, if his experience might be of benefit to his beloved son.'

'My father !'

'Nay, nay, don't agitate yourself ; we are consulting together. Let us see what is to be done. Endeavour to discover, when you are alone, what are the chief objects of your existence in this world. I want you to take no theological dogmas for granted, nor to satisfy your doubts by ceasing to think ; but, whether we are in this world in a state of probation for another, or whether we cease altogether when we cease to breathe, human feelings tell me that we have some duties to perform,—to our fellow-creatures—to our friends—to ourselves. Pray, tell me, my dear boy, what possible good your perusal of the latter Platonists can produce to either of these three interests ? I trust that *my* child is not one of those who look with a glazed eye on the welfare of their fellow-men, and who would dream away a useless life by idle puzzles of the brain :—creatures who consider their existence as an unprofitable mystery, and yet are afraid to die. You will find Plotinus in the fourth shelf of the next room, Vivian. Good-morning to you.'

CHAPTER VII

THE CLASSICS

THE communications between father and son after this day were very constant ; and for some weeks Vivian employed his time rather in conversing with his father, than with *books*. It must not be concealed (and when the fact is stated, it must not be conceived that Vivian's mind was a weak one) that his *fixed principles* became daily loosened, and that his opinions were very soon considerably modified. He speedily began to discover that there were *classics* in other languages besides Greek and Latin, and patient inquiry and dispassionate examination soon convinced him of the futility of that mass of insanity and imposture—the Greek philosophy. Introduced to that band of noble spirits, the great poets, and legislators, and philosophers of modern Europe, the mind of Vivian Grey recovered, in a study of their immortal writings, a great portion of its original freshness and primal vigour. Nor in his new worship did he blaspheme against the former objects of his adoration. He likened the ancient and the new literatures to the two Dispensations of Holy Writ :—the one arose to complete the other. Æschylus was to him not less divine, because Shakespeare was immortal ; nor did he deny the inspiration of Demosthenes, because he recognised in Burke the divine *afflatus*. The ancient literature, lost in corruption, degraded, and forgotten, ceased to benefit society ; the new literature arose. It hurled from 'the high places,' the idols of corrupt understandings and perverted taste ; but while 'it purified the altars of the Lord,' while it commanded our reverence and our gratitude, the new literature itself vailed to the first grey Fathers of the human mind.

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CHAPTER VIII

SOCIETY

IN England, personal distinction is the only passport to the society of the great. Whether this distinction arise from fortune, family, or talent, is immaterial ; but certain it is, to enter into high society, a man must either have blood, a million, or a genius.

Neither the fortune nor the family of Mr. Grey entitled him to mix in any other society than that of what is, in common parlance, termed, the middling classes ; but from his distinguished literary abilities he had always found himself an honoured guest among the powerful and the great. It was for this reason that he had always been anxious that his son should be at home as little as possible ; for he feared for a youth the fascination of London society. Although busied with his studies, and professing ‘not to visit,’ Vivian could not avoid occasionally finding himself in company, in which *boys* should never be seen ; and, what was still worse, from a certain *esprit de société*, an indefinable *tact*, with which Nature had endowed him, this boy of nineteen began to think this society very delightful. Most persons of his age would have passed through the ordeal with perfect safety ; they would have entered certain rooms, at certain hours, with stiff cravats, and Nugee coats, and black velvet waistcoats ; and after having annoyed all those who condescended to know of their existence, with their red hands, and their white kid gloves, they would have retired to a corner of the room, and conversationised with any stray four year older not yet sent to bed.

But Vivian Grey was an elegant, lively lad, with just enough of dandyism to preserve him from committing *gaucheries*, and with a devil of a tongue. All men, I am sure, will agree with me when I say, that the only rival to be feared by a man of spirit is—a clever boy.—What

makes them so popular with the women it is not for me to explain ; however, Lady Julia Knighton, and Mrs. Frank Delmington, and half a score of dames of fashion (and some of them very pretty !) were always patronising our hero, who really found an evening spent in their company not altogether dull ; for there is no fascination so irresistible to a boy as the smile of a married woman. Vivian had really passed such a recluse life for the last two years and a half, that he had quite forgotten that he was once considered a very agreeable fellow ; and so, determined to discover what right he ever had to such a reputation, master Vivian dashed into all these amourettes in very beautiful style.

But Vivian Grey was a young and tender plant in a moral hot-house. His character was developing itself too soon. Although his evenings were now generally passed in the manner we have alluded to, this boy was, during the rest of the day, a hard and indefatigable student ; and having now got through an immense series of historical reading, he had stumbled upon a branch of study certainly the most delightful in the world,—but, for a boy, as certainly the most pernicious,—THE STUDY OF POLITICS.

And now everything was solved ! the inexplicable longings of his soul, which had so often perplexed him, were at length explained. The *want*, the indefinable *want*, which he had so constantly experienced, was at last supplied ; the grand object on which to bring the powers of his mind to bear and work was at last provided. He paced his chamber in an agitated spirit, and panted for the Senate.

It may be asked, what was the evil of all this ? and the reader will, perhaps, murmur something about an honourable spirit and youthful ambition. The evil is *too* apparent. The time drew nigh for Vivian to leave his home for Oxford—that is, for him to *commence* his long preparation for entering on his career in life. And now this person, who was about to be a *pupil*—this boy, this stripling, who was going to begin his education,—had all

the desires of a matured mind—of an experienced man, but without maturity and without experience. He was already a cunning reader of human hearts; and felt conscious, that his was a tongue which was born to guide human beings. The idea of Oxford to such an individual was an insult !

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW THEORY

I MUST endeavour to trace, if possible, more accurately the workings of Vivian Grey's mind at this period of his existence. In the plenitude of his ambition, he stopped one day to inquire in what manner he could obtain his magnificent ends.

'THE BAR—pooh ! law and bad jokes till we are forty ; and then, with the most brilliant success, the prospect of gout and a coronet. Besides, to succeed as an advocate, I must be a great lawyer, and, to be a great lawyer, I must give up my chance of being a great man. THE SERVICES in war time are fit only for desperadoes (and that truly am I) ; but, in peace, are fit only for fools. THE CHURCH is more rational. Let me see : I should certainly like to act Wolsey ; but the thousand and one chances against me ! And truly I feel *my* destiny should not be on a chance. Were I the son of a Millionaire, or a noble, I might have *all*. Curse on my lot ! that the want of a few rascal counters, and the possession of a little rascal blood, should mar my fortunes !'

Such was the general tenor of Vivian's thoughts, until, musing himself almost into madness, he at last made, as he conceived, the GRAND DISCOVERY. '*Riches are Power*, says the Economist ;—and is not *Intellect* ? asks the philosopher. And yet, while the influence of the Millionaire is instantly felt in all classes of society, how is it that "Noble Mind" so often leaves us unknown and

unhonoured? Why have there been statesmen who have never ruled, and heroes who have never conquered? Why have glorious philosophers died in a garret? and why have there been poets whose only admirer has been Nature in her echoes? It must be that these beings have thought only of themselves, and, constant and elaborate students of their own glorious natures, have forgotten or disdained the study of all others. Yes! we must mix with the herd; we must enter into their feelings; we must humour their weaknesses; we must sympathise with the sorrows that we do not feel; and share the merriment of fools. Oh, yes! to *rule* men, we must *be* men; to prove that we are strong, we must be weak; to prove that we are giants, we must be dwarfs; even as the Eastern Genie was hid in the charmed bottle. Our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice.

‘I have been often struck by the ancient tales of Jupiter’s visits to the earth. In these fanciful adventures, the God bore no indication of the Thunderer’s glory; but was a man of low estate, a herdsman, or other hind; and often even an animal. A mighty spirit has in *Tradition*, Time’s great moralist, perused “the wisdom of the ancients.” Even in the same spirit, I would explain Jove’s terrestrial visitings. For, to govern man, even the God appeared to feel as a man; and sometimes as a beast, was apparently influenced by their vilest passions. Mankind, then, is my great game.

‘At this moment, how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a Minister; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end? That noble’s influence. When two persons can so materially assist each other, why are they not brought together? Shall I, because my birth baulks my fancy—shall I pass my life a moping misanthrope in an old château? Supposing I am in contact with this magnifico, am I prepared? Now, let me probe my very soul. Does my cheek blanch? ‘I have the mind for the conception; and I can perform right

skilfully upon the most splendid of musical instruments—the human voice—to make those conceptions beloved by others. There wants but one thing more—*courage*, pure, perfect, courage;—and does Vivian Grey know fear?’ He laughed an answer of bitterest derision.

CHAPTER X

A LOUNGE

IS any one surprised that Vivian Grey, with a mind teeming with such feelings, should view the approach of the season for his departure to Oxford, with sentiments of thorough disgust? After many hours of bitter meditation he sought his father; he made him acquainted with his feelings, but concealed from him his actual views, and dwelt on the misery of being thrown back in life, at a period when society seemed instinct with a spirit peculiarly active, and when so many openings were daily offered to the adventurous and the bold.

‘Vivian,’ said Mr. Grey, ‘beware of endeavouring to become a great man in a hurry. One such attempt in ten thousand may succeed: these are fearful odds. Admirer as you are of Lord Bacon, you may perhaps remember a certain parable of his, called “Memnon, or a youth too forward.” I hope you are not going to be one of those sons of Aurora, “who, puffed up with the glittering show of vanity and ostentation, attempt actions above their strength.”’

‘You talk to me about the peculiarly active spirit of society; if the spirit of society be so peculiarly active, Mr. Vivian Grey should beware lest it outstrip him. Is neglecting to mature your mind, my boy, exactly the way to win the race? This is an age of unsettled opinions and contested principles:—in the very measures of our administration, the speculative spirit of the present day is,

to say the least, not impalpable. Nay, don't start, my dear fellow, and look the very *Prosopopeia* of Political Economy! I know exactly what you are going to say, but, if you please, we'll leave Turgot and Galileo to Mr Canning and the house of Commons, or your cousin Hargrave and his Debating Society. However, jesting apart, get your hat, and walk with me as far as Evans's; where I have promised to look in, to see the Mazarin Bible, and we'll talk this affair over as we go along.

'I am no bigot, you know, Vivian. I am not one of those who wish to oppose the application of refined philosophy to the common business of life. We are, I hope, an improving race; there is room, I am sure, for great improvement, and the perfectibility of man is certainly a very pretty dream. (How well that Union Club House comes out now, since they have made the opening;) but, although we may have steam kitchens, human nature is, I imagine, much the same this moment that we are walking Pall-Mall East, as it was some thousands of years ago, when as wise men were walking on the banks of the Ilyssus. When our moral powers increase in proportion to our physical ones, then huzza for the perfectibility of man! and respectable, idle loungers like you and I, Vivian, may then have a chance of walking in the streets of London without having their heels trodden upon; a ceremony which I have this moment undergone. In the present day we are all studying science, and none of us are studying ourselves. This is not exactly the Socratic process; and as for the *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* of the more ancient Athenian, that principle is quite out of fashion in the *nineteenth century* (I believe that's the phrase). Self is the only person whom we know nothing about.

'But, my dear Vivian, as to the immediate point of our consideration:—in my library, uninfluenced and uncontrolled by passion or by party, I cannot but see that it is utterly impossible that all that we are wishing and striving for can take place, without some—without much evil. In ten years' time, perhaps, or less, the fever

will have subsided, and in ten years' time, or less, your intellect will be matured. Now, my good Sir, instead of talking about the active spirit of the age, and the opportunities offered to the adventurous and the bold, ought you not rather to congratulate yourself, that a great change is being effected, at a period of your life when you need not, individually, be subjected to the possibility of being injured by its operation; and when you are preparing your mind to take advantage of the system, when that system is matured and organised?

'As to your request, it assuredly is one of the most modest, and the most rational, that I have lately been favoured with. Although I would much rather that any influence which I may exercise over your mind, should be the effect of my advice as your friend, than of my authority as your father; still I really feel it my duty, parentally, to protest against this very crude proposition of yours. However, if you choose to lose a term or two, do. Don't blame me, you know, if afterwards you repent it.'

Here dashed by the gorgeous equipage of Mrs. Ormolu, the wife of a man who was working all the gold and silver mines in Christendom. 'Ah! my dear Vivian,' said Mr. Grey, 'it is *this* which has turned all your brains. In this age every one is striving to make an immense fortune, and what is most terrific, at the same time a speedy one. This thirst for sudden wealth it is, which engenders the extravagant conceptions, and fosters that wild spirit of speculation which is now stalking abroad; and which, like the Dæmon in Frankenstein, not only fearfully wanders over the whole wide face of nature, but grins in the imagined solitude of our secret chambers. Oh! my son, it is for the young men of the present day that I tremble—seduced by the temporary success of a few children of fortune, I observe that their minds recoil from the prospects which are held forth by the ordinary, and, mark me,—by the *only* modes of acquiring property—fair trade, and

honourable professions. It is for you and your companions that I fear. God grant! that there may not be a moral as well as a political disorganisation! God grant that our youth, the hope of our state, may not be lost to us! For, oh! my son, the wisest has said, "He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent." Let us step into Clarke's and take an ice.'

BOOK THE SECOND

CHAPTER I

THE MARQUESS OF CARABAS

THE Marquess of Carabas started in life as the cadet of a noble family. The earl, his father, like the woodman in the fairy tale, was blessed with three sons—the first was an idiot, and was destined for the Coronet; the second was a man of business, and was educated for the Commons; the third was a *Roué*, and was shipped to the Colonies.

The present Marquess, then the Honourable Sidney Lorraine, prospered in his political career. He was servile, and pompous, and indefatigable, and loquacious—so whispered the world:—his friends hailed him as, at once, a courtier and a sage, a man of business, and an orator. After revelling in his fair proportion of commissionerships, and under-secretaryships, and the rest of the milk and honey of the political Canaan, the apex of the pyramid of his ambition was at length visible, for Sidney Lorraine became President of a Board, and wriggled into the adytum of the cabinet.

At this moment his idiot brother died. To compensate for his loss of office, and to secure his votes, the Earl of Carabas was promoted in the peerage, and was presented with some magnificent office, meaning nothing—swelling with dignity, and void of duties. As years rolled on, various changes took place in the administration, of which his Lordship was once a component part; and the ministry, to their surprise, getting popular, found

that the command of the Carabas interest was not of such vital importance to them as heretofore, and so his Lordship was voted a bore, and got shelved. Not that his Lordship was bereaved of his splendid office, or that anything occurred, indeed, by which the *uninitiated* might have been led to suppose that the beams of his Lordship's consequence were shorn ; but the Marquess's secret applications at the Treasury were no longer listened to ; and pert under-secretaries settled their cravats, and whispered 'that the Carabas interest was gone by.'

The most noble Marquess was not insensible to his situation, for he was what the world calls *ambitious* ; but the vigour of his faculties had vanished beneath the united influence of years and indolence and ill-humour ; for his Lordship, to avoid ennui, had quarrelled with his son, and then having lost his only friend, had quarrelled with himself.

Such was the distinguished individual who graced, one day at the latter end of the season of 18—, the classic board of Horace Grey, Esquire. The reader will, perhaps, be astonished, that such a man as his Lordship, should be the guest of such a man as our hero's father ; but the truth is, the Marquess of Carabas had just been disappointed in an attempt on the chair of the President of the Royal Society ; which, for want of something better to do, he was ambitious of filling, and this was a conciliatory visit to one of the most distinguished members of that body, and one who had voted against him with particular enthusiasm. The Marquess, still a politician, was now, as he imagined, securing his host's vote for a future St. Andrew's day.

The *cuisine* of Mr. Grey was *superbe* ; for although an enthusiastic advocate for the cultivation of the mind, he was an equally ardent supporter of the cultivation of the body. Indeed, the necessary dependence of the sanity of the one on the good keeping of the other, was one of his most favourite theories, and one which, this day, he was supporting with very pleasant and facetious reason-

ing. His Lordship was delighted with his new friend, and still more delighted with his new friend's theory. The Marquess himself was, indeed, quite of the same opinion as Mr. Grey ; for he never made a speech without previously taking a sandwich, and would have sunk under the estimates a thousand times, had it not been for the juicy friendship of the fruit of Portugal.

The guests were not numerous. A regius professor of Greek ; an officer just escaped from Sockatoo ; a man of science, and two M.P.'s with his Lordship ; the host, and Mr. Vivian Grey, constituted the party. Oh, no ! there were two others. There was a Mr. John Brown, a fashionable poet, and who, ashamed of his own name published his melodies under the more euphonious and romantic title of '*Clarence Devonshire*,' and there was a Mr. Thomas Smith, a fashionable novelist ;—that is to say, a person who occasionally publishes three volumes, one-half of which contain the adventures of a young gentleman in the country ; and the other volume and a-half, the adventures of the same young gentleman in the metropolis ;—a sort of writer, whose constant tattle about beer and billiards, and eating soup, and the horribility of '*committing*' puns, give truly a most admirable and accurate idea of the conversation of the refined society of the refined metropolis of Great Britain. These two last gentlemen were '*pets*' of Mrs. Grey.

The conversation may be conceived. Each person was of course prepared with a certain quota of information, without which no man in London is morally entitled *to dine out* ; and when the quota was expended, the amiable host took the burthen upon his own shoulders, and endeavoured, as the phrase goes, '*to draw out*' his guests.

Oh, London dinners ! empty artificial nothings ! and that beings can be found, and those too the flower of the land, who, day after day, and day after day, can act the same parts in the same dull, dreary farce ! The officer had discoursed sufficiently about 'his intimate friend, the Soudan,' and about the chain armour of the

Sockatoo cuirassiers ; and one of the M.P.'s, who was in the Guards, had been defeated in a ridiculous attempt to prove, that the breast-plates of the household troops of Great Britain were superior to those of the household troops of Tintomtomtomtoo. Mrs. Grey, to whose opinion both parties deferred, gave it in favour of the Soudan. And the man of science had lectured about a machine which might destroy fifteen square feet of human beings in a second, and yet be carried in the waistcoat-pocket. And the *Classique*, who, for a professor, was quite a man of the world, had the latest news of the new Herculaneum process, and was of opinion that, if they could but succeed in unrolling a certain suspicious-looking scroll, we might be so fortunate as to possess a minute treatise on etc., etc., etc. In short, all had said their say. There was a dead pause, and Mrs. Grey looked at her husband and rose.

How singular it is, that when this move takes place every one appears to be relieved, and yet every one of any experience must be quite aware that the *dead bore* work is only about to commence. Howbeit, all filled their glasses, and the Peer, at the top of the table, began to talk politics. I am sure that I cannot tell what the weighty subject was that was broached by the ex-minister ; for I did not dine with Grey that day ; and had I done so, I should have been equally ignorant ; for I'm a dull man, and always sleep at dinner. However, the subject was political, the claret flew round, and a stormy argument commenced. The Marquess was decidedly wrong, and was sadly badgered by the civil M.P. and the Professor. The host, who was of no party, supported his guest as long as possible, and then left him to his fate. The Military M.P. fled to the drawing-room to philander with Mrs. Grey ; and the man of science, and the African had already retired to the intellectual idiotism of a May Fair 'At Home.' The novelist was silent, for he was studying a scene—and the poet was absent, for he was *musings* a sonnet.

The Marquess refuted, had recourse to contradiction, and was too acute a man to be insensible to the forlornness of his situation ; when, at this moment, a voice proceeded from the end of the table, from a young gentleman, who had hitherto preserved a profound silence, but whose silence, if the company were to have judged from the tones of his voice, and the matter of his communication, did not altogether proceed from a want of confidence in his own abilities. ‘In my opinion,’ said Mr. Vivian Grey, as he sat lounging in his father’s vacated seat—‘in my opinion his Lordship has been misunderstood ; and it is, as is generally the case, from a slight verbal misconception in the commencement of this argument, that the whole of this difference arises.’

The eyes of the Marquess sparkled—and the mouth of the Marquess was closed. His Lordship was delighted that his reputation might yet be saved ; but as he was not perfectly acquainted in what manner that salvation was to be effected, he prudently left the battle to his youthful champion.

Mr. Vivian Grey proceeded with the utmost sangfroid : he commented upon expressions, split and subtilised words, insinuated opinions, and finally quoted a whole passage of Bolingbroke to prove that the opinion of the most noble the Marquess of Carabas was one of the soundest, wisest, and most convincing of opinions that ever was promulgated by mortal man. The tables were turned, the guests looked astounded, the Marquess settled his ruffles, and perpetually exclaimed, ‘*Exactly* what I meant !’ and his opponents, full of wine, and quite puzzled, gave in.

It was a rule with Vivian Grey, never to advance any opinion *as his own*. He had been too deep a student of human nature, not to be aware that the opinions of a boy of twenty, however sound, and however correct, stand but a poor chance of being adopted by his elder, though feebler, fellow-creatures. In attaining any end, it was therefore his system always to advance his opinion

as that of some eminent and considered personage ; and when, under the sanction of this name, the opinion or advice was entertained and listened to, Vivian Grey had no fear that he could prove its correctness and its expediency. He possessed also the singular faculty of being able to *improvise quotations*, that is, he could unpremeditatedly clothe his conceptions in language characteristic of the style of any particular author : and Vivian Grey was reputed in the world as having the most astonishing memory that ever existed ; for there was scarcely a subject of discussion in which he did not gain the victory, by the great names he enlisted on his side of the argument. His father was aware of the existence of this dangerous faculty, and had often remonstrated with his son on the use of it. On the present occasion, when the buzz had somewhat subsided, Mr. Grey looked smiling to his son, and said : ‘Vivian, my dear, can you tell me in what work of Bolingbroke I can find the eloquent passage you have just quoted ?’—‘Ask Mr. Hargrave, Sir,’ replied the son, with the most perfect coolness ; then, turning to the member : ‘You know, Mr. Hargrave, you are reputed the most profound political student in the House, and more intimately acquainted than any other person with the works of Bolingbroke.’

Mr. Hargrave knew no such thing ;—but he was a weak man, and, seduced by the compliment, he was afraid to prove himself unworthy of it by confessing his ignorance of the passage.

Coffee was announced.

Vivian did not let the Peer escape him in the drawing-room. He soon managed to enter into conversation with him ; and certainly the Marquess of Carabas never found a more entertaining companion. Vivian discoursed on a new Venetian liqueur, and taught the Marquess how to mull Moselle, an operation of which the Marquess had never heard (as who has ?) ; and then the flood of anecdotes, and little innocent personalities, and the

compliments so exquisitely introduced, that they scarcely appeared to be compliments ; and the voice so pleasant, and conciliating, and the quotation from the Marquess's own speech ! and the wonderful art of which the Marquess was *not* aware, by which, during all this time, the lively, chattering, amusing, elegant conversationist, so full of scandal, politics, and cookery, did not so much appear to be Mr. Vivian Grey as the Marquess of Carabas himself.

‘Well, I must be gone,’ said the fascinated noble ; ‘I really have not felt in such spirits for some time ; I almost fear I have been vulgar enough to be amusing, eh ! eh ! eh !—but you young men are sad fellows, eh ! eh ! eh !—Don’t forget to call on me—good evening ! and Mr. Vivian Grey ! Mr. Vivian Grey !’ said his Lordship returning, ‘you’ll not forget the receipt you promised me for making tomahawk punch.’

‘Certainly not, my Lord,’ said the young man ;—‘only it must be invented first,’ thought Vivian, as he took up his light to retire. ‘But never mind, never mind ;—

Chapeau bas ! chapeau bas !
Gloire au Marquis de Carabas ! !’

CHAPTER II

THE RECEIPT

A FEW days after the dinner at Mr. Grey’s, as the Marquess of Carabas was sitting in his library, and sighing, in the fulness of his ennui, as he looked on his large library-table, once triply covered with official communications, now thinly besprinkled with a stray parliamentary paper or two, his steward’s accounts, and a few letters from some grumbling tenants ; Mr. Vivian Grey was announced.

‘I fear I am intruding on your Lordship, but I

really could not refrain from bringing you the receipt I promised.'

'Most happy to see ye, most happy to see ye.'

'This is exactly the correct receipt, my Lord. TO EVERY TWO BOTTLES OF STILL CHAMPAGNE, ONE PINT OF CURAÇOA.' The Peer's eyes glistened, and his companion proceeded; 'ONE PINT OF CURAÇOA; CATCH THE AROMA OF A POUND OF GREEN TEA, AND DASH THE WHOLE WITH GLENLIVET.'

'Splendid!' ejaculated the Marquess.

'The nice point, however, which it is impossible to define in a receipt, is *catching the Aroma*. What sort of a genius is your Lordship's gastrical *chef*?'

'Splendid!' re-ejaculated the Marquis; 'Laporte is a genius.'

'Well, my Lord! I shall be most happy to superintend the first concoction for you; and remember particularly,' said Vivian, rising, 'remember, it must be *iced*.'

'Certainly, my dear fellow: but pray don't think of going yet.'

'I am very sorry, my Lord; but such a pressure of engagements—your Lordship's kindness is so great, and, really, I fear, that *at this moment especially*, your Lordship can scarcely be in a humour for my trifling.'

'Why this moment *especially*, Mr. Vivian Grey?'

'Oh, my Lord! I am perfectly aware of your Lordship's talents for business; but still I had conceived, that the delicate situation in which your Lordship is *now* placed, requiring such anxious attention such—'

'Delicate situation; anxious attention! why man! you speak riddles. I certainly have a great deal of business to transact: people are so obstinate, or so foolish, they will consult me, certainly,—and certainly I feel it my duty, Mr. Vivian Grey,—I feel it the duty, Sir, of every Peer in this happy country (here his Lordship got parliamentary);—yes, Sir, I feel it due to my character, to my family, to—to—to assist with my

advice, all those who think fit to consult me.' Splendid peroration !

'Oh, my Lord !' carelessly remarked Vivian, 'I thought it was a mere *on dit*.'

'Thought *what*, my dear Sir ! you really quite perplex me.'

'I mean to say, my Lord—I, I thought it was impossible the overtures had been made.'

'Overtures, Mr. Vivian Grey ?'

'Yes, my Lord ! Overtures—hasn't your Lordship seen the Post ?—but I knew it was impossible,—I said so, I——'

'Said *what*, Mr. Vivian Grey ?'

'Said that the whole paragraph was unfounded.'

'*Paragraph !* what paragraph ?' and his Lordship rose, and rang the library bell, with a vehemence worthy of a Marquess—'Sadler, bring me the Morning Post.'

The servant entered with the paper : Mr. Vivian Grey seized it from his hands before it reached the Marquess, and glancing his eye over it with the rapidity of lightning, doubled up the sheet in a convenient readable form, and pushing it into his Lordship's hands, exclaimed, 'There, my Lord ! there, that will explain *all*.'

His Lordship read :—

'We are informed that some alteration in the composition of the present administration is in contemplation ; Lord Past Century, it is said, will retire ; Mr. Liberal Principles will have the ———— ; and Mr. Charlatan Gas the ————. A noble peer, whose practised talents have already benefited the nation, and who, on vacating his seat in the Cabinet, was elevated in the peerage, is reported as having had certain overtures made him, the nature of which may be conceived ; but which, under the present circumstances, it would be indelicate in us to hint at.'

It would have been impossible for a hawk to have watched its quarry with eyes of more fixed and anxious earnestness, than did Vivian Grey the Marquess of

Carabas, as his Lordship's eyes wandered over the paragraph. Vivian drew his chair close to the table opposite to the Marquess, and when the paragraph was read, their eyes met.

'Utterly untrue,' whispered the peer with an agitated voice, and with a countenance which, for a moment, seemed intellectual. 'But why, Mr. Vivian Grey should deem the fact of such overtures having been made, "*impossible*," I confess, astonishes me.'

'*Impossible*, my Lord !'

'Ay, Mr. Grey, *impossible*, that was your word.'

'Oh, my Lord ? what should I know about these matters ?'

'Nay, nay, Mr. Grey, something must have been floating in your mind—why *impossible*, why *impossible* ? Did your father think so ?'

'My father ! Oh ! no, he never thinks about these matters ; ours is not a political family , I'm not sure that he ever looks at a newspaper.'

'But, my dear Mr. Grey, you would not have used the word without having some meaning. *Why* did you think it impossible ? *impossible* is such a peculiar word.' And here the Marquess looked up with great earnestness to a portrait of himself, which hung over the fire-place. It was one of Sir Thomas's happiest efforts ; but it was not the happiness of the likeness, nor the beauty of the painting, which now attracted his Lordship's attention ; he thought only of the costume in which he appeared in that portrait—the *court dress of a Cabinet Minister* ; '*Impossible*, Mr. Grey, you must confess is a *very* peculiar word,' reiterated his Lordship.

'I said *impossible*, my Lord, because I *did* conceive, that had your Lordship been of a disposition to which such overtures might have been made with any *probability* of success, the Marquess of Carabas would have been in a situation which would have precluded the *possibility* of those overtures being made at all.'

'Hah !' and the Marquess nearly started from his seat.

‘Yes, my Lord, I am a young, an inexperienced young man, ignorant of the world’s ways ; doubtless I was wrong, but I have much to learn,’ and his voice faltered ; ‘but I did conceive, that having power at his *command*, the Marquess of Carabas did not exercise it, merely because he despised it :—but what should I know of such matters, my Lord ?’

‘Is power a thing *so easily* to be despised, young man ?’ asked the Marquess. His eye rested on a vote of thanks from the ‘Merchants and Bankers of London to the Right Honourable Sidney Lorraine, President, etc. etc. etc.’ which, splendidly emblazoned, and gilt, and framed, and glazed, was suspended opposite the President’s portrait.

‘Oh, no ! my Lord, you do mistake me,’ eagerly burst forth Vivian, ‘I am no cold-blooded philosopher, that would despise *that*, for which, in my opinion, men, *real* men, should alone exist. Power ! Oh ! what sleepless nights, what days of hot anxiety ! what exertions of mind and body ! what travel ! what hatred ! what fierce encounters ! what dangers of all possible kinds, would I not endure with a joyous spirit to gain it ! But such, my Lord, I thought were feelings peculiar to inexperienced young men ; and seeing you, my Lord, so situated, that you might command *all and everything*, and yet living as you *do*, I was naturally led to believe that the object of my adoration was a vain glittering bauble, of which those who could possess it, knew the utter worthlessness.’

The peer sat in a musing mood, playing the Devil’s tattoo on the library table ; at last, he raised his eyes from the French varnish, and said to Vivian, in a low whisper, ‘Are you so certain that I can command *all and everything* ?’

‘*All and everything* ! did I say all and everything ? Really my Lord, you scan my expressions so critically !—but I see your Lordship is smiling at my boyish nonsense ! and really I feel that I have already wasted too much of your Lordship’s valuable time, and displayed too much of my own ignorance.’

‘My dear Sir, I am not aware that I was smiling.

‘Oh ! your Lordship is so *very* kind.’

‘But, my dear Sir ! you are really labouring under a very great mistake. I am desirous, I am *particularly* desirous, of having your opinion upon this subject.’

‘*My* opinion, my Lord ! what should *my* opinion be, but an echo of the circle in which I live, but a faithful representation of the feelings of general society.’

‘And, Mr. Grey, I should be glad to know what can possibly be more interesting to me than a faithful representation of the feelings of general society on this subject ?’

‘The many, my Lord, are not *always* right.’

‘Mr. Grey, the many are not often wrong. Come, my dear Sir, do me the favour of being frank, and let me know why the public is of opinion that *all and everything* is in my power, for such, after all, *were* your words.’

‘If I did use them, my Lord, it was because I was thinking, as I often am, what after all in this country is public life ? Is it not a race in which the swiftest must surely win the prize—and is not that prize *power* ?—Has not your Lordship treasure ? There is your moral steam which can work the world. Has not your Lordship treasure’s most splendid consequences, pure blood and aristocratic influence ? The Millionaire has in his possession the seeds of everything, but he must wait for half a century till his descendant finds himself in your Lordship’s state—till he is yclept noble, and then he starts fair in the grand course. All these advantages your Lordship has apparently at hand, with the additional advantage (and one, oh ! how great !) of having already proved to your country, that you know *how* to rule.’

There was a dead silence, which at length the Marquess broke. ‘There is *much* in what you say ; but I cannot conceal it from myself, I have no wish to conceal it from you—*I am not what I was*.’—Oh, ambition ! thou art the parent of truth.

‘Ah, my Lord !’ eagerly rejoined Vivian, ‘here is the

terrible error into which you great statesmen have always fallen. Think you not, that *intellect* is as much a purchasable article as fine parks and fair castles? With your Lordship's tried and splendid talents, *everything* might be done; but, in my opinion, if, instead of a practised, an experienced, and wary Statesman, I was now addressing *an idiot Earl*, I should not see, that the great end might not equally be consummated.'

'Say you so, my merry man, and how?'

'Why, my Lord,—but,—but, I feel that I am trespassing on your Lordship's time, otherwise I think I could show *why* society is of opinion that your Lordship can do *all and everything*—how, indeed, your Lordship might, in a very short time, be—Prime Minister.'

'No, Mr. Grey;—this conversation must be finished. I'll first give orders that we may not be disturbed, and then we'll proceed immediately. Come, now! your manner takes me, and we will converse in the spirit of the most perfect confidence.'

Here, as the Marquess settled at the same time his chair and his countenance, and looked as anxious as if Majesty itself was consulting him on the formation of a ministry, in burst the Marchioness, notwithstanding all the remonstrances, entreaties, threats, and supplications of Mr. Sadler.

Her Ladyship had been what they style a *splendid woman*; she was now *passata*, although with the aid of cachemeres, diamonds, and turbans, her tout ensemble was still very striking. Her Ladyship was not remarkable for anything, save a correct taste for poodles, parrots, and bijouterie, and a proper admiration of Theodore Hook, and John Bull.

'Oh! Marquess,' exclaimed her Ladyship, and a favourite green parrot, which came flying in after its accustomed perch, her Ladyship's left shoulder, shrieked at the same time in concert—'Oh! Marquess, my poor Julie! You know we've noticed how nervous she has been for some days past, and I had just given her a saucer

of arrowroot and milk, and she seemed a little easier, and I said to Miss Graves, "I really do think she is a *leetle* better," and Miss Graves said, "Yes, my Lady, I hope she is"; when, just as we flattered ourselves that the dear little creature was enjoying a quiet sleep, Miss Graves called out, "Oh, my Lady! my Lady! Julie's in a fit!" and when I turned round, she was lying on her back, kicking, with her eyes shut.' And here the Marchioness detected Mr. Grey, and gave him as fashionable a stare as might be expected from a Lady Patroness of Almack's.

'The Marchioness—Mr. Vivian Grey—My love, I assure you we're engaged in a most important, a most

_____,
'Oh! my life, I wouldn't disturb you for the world, only if you will just tell me what you think ought to be done; leeches, or a warm bath; or shall I send for Doctor Blue Pill?'

The Marquess looked a little annoyed, as if he wished her Ladyship——in her own room again. He was almost meditating a gentle reprimand, vexed that his grave young friend should have witnessed this frivolous intrusion, when that accomplished stripling, to the astonishment of the future minister, immediately recommended 'the warm bath,' and then lectured with equal rapidity and erudition on dogs and their diseases in general.

The Marchioness retired, 'easier in her mind about Julie, than she had been for some days,' as Vivian assured her 'that it was not apoplexy, but only the first symptom of an epidemic.' And as she retired, she murmured her gratitude most gracefully to Julie's young physician, and her prime minister, the parrot, on her left shoulder, at the same time cackled a compliment.

'Now, Mr. Grey,' said his Lordship, endeavouring to recover his dignity, 'we were discussing the public sentiments, you know, on a certain point, when this unfortunate interruption——'

Vivian had not much difficulty in collecting his ideas,

and he proceeded, not as displeased as his Lordship, with the domestic *scena*.

‘I need not remind your Lordship, that the two great parties into which this State is divided, are *apparently* very unequally proportioned. Your Lordship well knows how the party to which your Lordship is *said* to belong, your Lordship knows, I imagine, how that is constituted. We have nothing to do with *the other*. My Lord, I must speak out. No thinking man,—and such, I trust, Vivian Grey is,—no *thinking* man can for a moment suppose, that your Lordship’s heart is *very warm* in the cause of a party, which—for I will not mince my words—*has betrayed you*. How is it, it is asked by *thinking* men, how is it that the Marquess of Carabas is—the *tool* of a faction?’

The Marquess breathed loud, ‘They say *so*, do they?’

‘Why, my Lord, listen even to your servants in your own hall—need I say more? How, then! is this opinion true? Let us look to your conduct to the party, to which you are *said* to belong. Your votes are theirs, your influence is theirs; and for all this, what return, my Lord Marquess, what return? My Lord, I am not rash enough to suppose, that your Lordship, *alone and unsupported*, can make yourself the arbiter of this country’s destinies. It would be ridiculous to entertain such an idea for a second. The existence of such a man would not be endured by the nation *for a second*. But, my Lord, *union is strength*. Nay, my Lord, start not—I am not going to advise you to throw yourself into the arms of opposition; leave such advice for greenhorns. I am not going to adopt a line of conduct, which would, for a moment, compromise the consistency of your high character; leave such advice for fools. My Lord, it is to preserve your consistency, it is to vindicate your high character, it is to make the Marquess of Carabas perform the duties which society requires from him, that I, Vivian Grey, a member of that society, and an humble friend of your Lordship, speak so boldly.’

‘My friend,’ said the agitated Peer, ‘you cannot speak *too* boldly. My mind opens to you. I have felt, I have long felt, that I was not what I ought to be, that I was not what society requires me to be :—but where is your remedy, what is the line of conduct that I should pursue?’

‘The remedy, my Lord ! I never conceived, for a moment, that there was any doubt of the existence of means to attain *all and everything*. I think that was your Lordship’s phrase. I only hesitated as to the existence of the *inclination*, on the part of your Lordship.’

‘You cannot doubt it *now*,’ said the Peer, in a low voice ; and then his Lordship looked anxiously round the room, as if he feared that there had been some mysterious witness to his whisper.

‘My Lord,’ said Vivian, and he drew his chair close to the Marquess, ‘the plan is shortly this. There are others in a similar situation with yourself. All *thinking* men know,—your Lordship knows still better,—that there are others equally influential—equally ill-treated. How is it that I see no concert among these individuals ? How is it that, jealous of each other, or each trusting that he may ultimately prove an exception to the system of which he is a victim ; how is it, I say, that you look with cold hearts on each other’s situations ? My Lord Marquess, it is at the head of these that I would place you ; it is these that I would have act with you—and this is the *union* which is *strength*.’

‘You are right, you are right ; there is Courtown, but we do not speak. There is Beaconsfield, but we are not intimate,—but much might be done.’

‘My Lord, you must not be daunted at a few difficulties, or at a little exertion. But as for Courtown, or Beaconsfield, or fifty other offended men, if it can be shown to them that their interest is to be your Lordship’s friend, trust me, that ere six months are over, they will have pledged their troth. Leave all this to me—give me your Lordship’s name,’ said Vivian, whispering most earnestly in the Marquess’s ear, and laying his hand upon

his Lordship's arm—'give me your Lordship's name, and your Lordship's influence, and I will take upon myself the whole organisation of the CARABAS PARTY.'

'The Carabas party!—Ah! we must think more of this.'

The Marquess's eyes smiled with triumph, as he shook Vivian cordially by the hand, and begged him to call upon him on the morrow.

CHAPTER III

THE MOTTO

THE intercourse between the Marquess and Vivian, after this interview, was constant. No dinner-party was thought perfect at Carabas House, without the presence of the young gentleman; and as the Marchioness was delighted with the perpetual presence of an individual whom she could always consult about Julie, there was apparently no domestic obstacle to Vivian's remaining in high favour.

The Earl of Églamour, the only child in whom were concentrated all the hopes of the illustrious House of Lorraine, was in Italy. The only remaining member of the domestic circle who was wanting, was the Honourable Mrs. Felix Lorraine, the wife of the Marquess's younger brother. This lady, exhausted by the gaiety of the season, had left town somewhat earlier than she usually did, and was inhaling fresh air, and of course studying botany, at the magnificent seat of the Carabas family, CHÂTEAU DÉSIR, at which splendid place Vivian was to pass the summer.

Mr. Grey watched the movements of his son with an anxious, but apparently with no curious eye. 'If the Marquess will give my son a good place, why Master Vivian's new system works rather better than I conceived it would; but how the young knave hath so

managed, shall I say ? the old fool,—does, I confess, puzzle my philosophy.’

Alas ! when Mr. Grey jocosely used the phrase ‘*new system*,’ he was little aware of the workings of his son’s mind. But so it is in life ; a father is, perhaps, the worst judge of his son’s capacity. He knows too much—and too little.

In the meantime, as we before stated, all was sunshine with Vivian Grey. His noble friend and himself were in perpetual converse, and constantly engaged in deep consultation. As yet, the world knew nothing, except that, according to the Marquess of Carabas, ‘Vivian Grey was the most astonishingly clever and prodigiously accomplished fellow that ever breathed.’ And as the Marquess always added, ‘resembled himself very much when *he* was young.’

But it must not be supposed, that Vivian was to all the world the fascinating creature that he was to the Marquess of Carabas. Many complained that he was reserved, silent, satirical, and haughty. But the truth was, Vivian Grey often asked himself, ‘who is to be my enemy to-morrow ?’ He was too cunning a master of the human mind, not to be aware of the quicksands upon which all greenhorns strike ;—he knew too well the danger of *unnecessary intimacy*. A SMILE FOR A FRIEND, AND A SNEER FOR THE WORLD, is the way to govern mankind, and such was the motto of Vivian Grey.

CHAPTER IV

CHÂTEAU DÉSIR

HOW shall I describe CHÂTEAU DÉSIR, that place fit for all princes ? In the midst of a park of great extent, and eminent for scenery, as varied as might please Nature’s most capricious lover ; in the midst of green lawns, and deep winding glens, and cool-

ing streams, and wild forest, and soft woodland, there was gradually formed an elevation, on which was situate a mansion of great size, and of that bastard, but picturesque, style of architecture, called the Italian Gothic. The date of its erection was about the middle of the sixteenth century. You entered by a noble gateway, in which the pointed style still predominated ; but in various parts of which, the Ionic column, and the prominent keystone, and other creations of Roman architecture, intermingled with the expiring Gothic, into a large quadrangle, to which the square casement windows, and the triangular pediments or gable ends, supplying the place of battlements, gave a varied and Italian feature. In the centre of the court, from an immense marble basin, the rim of which was enriched by a splendidly sculptured lotus border, rose a marble group, representing Amphitrite with her marine attendants, whose sounding shells and coral sceptres sent forth their subject element in sparkling showers. This work, the chef d'œuvre of the celebrated artist of Vicenza, had been purchased by Valerian, first Lord Carabas, who having spent the greater part of his life as the representative of his monarch at the Ducal Court of Venice, at length returned to his native country ; and in the creation of Château Désir, endeavoured to find some consolation for the loss of his gay palazzo on the banks of the Adige.

Over the gateway there rose a turreted tower, the small square window of which, notwithstanding its stout stanchions, illumined the muniment room of the House of Carabas. In the spandrels of the gateway, and in many other parts of the building, might be seen the arms of the family ; while the innumerable stacks of chimneys, which appeared to spring from all parts of the roof, were carved and built in such curious and quaint devices, that they were rather an ornament than an excrescence. When you entered the quadrangle, you found one side solely occupied by the old hall, the immense carved rafters of whose oaken roof rested on corbels of the family

supporters, against the walls. The walls of the hall were of stone, but these were covered half-way from the ground with a panelling of curiously carved oak ; whence were suspended, in massy frames, the family portraits, painted partly by Dutch, and partly by Italian artists. Near the Dais, or upper part of the Hall, there projected an oriel window, which, as you beheld, you scarcely knew what most to admire, the radiancy of its painted panes, or the fantastic richness of Gothic ornament, which was profusely lavished in every part of its masonry. Here too the Gothic pendent, and the Gothic fan-work, were intermingled with the Italian arabesques, which, at the time of the building of the Château, had been recently introduced into England by Hans Holbein and John of Padua.

How wild and fanciful are those ancient arabesques ! Here at Château Désir, in the panelling of the old hall, might you see fantastic scrolls, separated by bodies ending in termini, and whose heads supported the Ionic volute, while the arch, which appeared to spring from these capitals, had, for a keystone, heads more monstrous than those of the fabled animals of Ctesias ; or so ludicrous, that you forgot the classic Griffin in the grotesque conception of the Italian artist. Here was a gibbering monkey, there a grinning Pulcinello ; now you viewed a chattering devil, which might have figured in the Temptation of St. Anthony ; and now a mournful, mystic, bearded countenance, which might have flitted in the back scene of a Witches' Sabbath.

A long Gallery wound through the upper story of two other sides of the quadrangle, and beneath were the show suite of apartments, with a sight of which the admiring eyes of curious tourists were occasionally delighted.

The grey stone walls of this antique edifice were, in many places, thickly covered with ivy, and other parasitical plants, the deep green of whose verdure beautifully contrasted with the scarlet glories of the *pyrus japonica*, which gracefully clustered round the windows of the

lower chambers. The mansion itself was immediately surrounded by numerous ancient forest trees. There was the elm, with its rich branches, bending down like clustering grapes; there was the wide-spreading oak, with its roots fantastically gnarled; there was the ash, with its smooth bark and elegant leaf; and the silver beech, and the gracile birch; and the dark fir, affording with its rough foliage, a contrast to the trunks of its more beautiful companions, or shooting far above their branches, with the spirit of freedom worthy of a rough child of the mountains.

Around the Castle were extensive pleasure-grounds, which realised the romance of the Gardens of Verulam. And truly, as you wandered through their enchanting paths, there seemed no end to their various beauties, and no exhaustion of their perpetual novelty. Green retreats succeeded to winding walks; from the shady *berçeau*, you vaulted on the noble terrace; and if, for an instant, you felt wearied by treading the velvet lawn, you might rest in a mossy cell, while your mind was soothed by the soft music of falling waters. Now, your curious eyes were greeted by Oriental animals, basking in a sunny paddock; and when you turned from the white-footed antelope, and the dark-eyed gazelle, you viewed an aviary of such extent, that within its trellised walls the imprisoned songsters could build, in the free branches of a tree, their natural nests.

‘Oh, fair scene!’ thought Vivian Grey, as he approached, on a fine summer’s afternoon, the splendid Château. ‘Oh, fair scene! doubly fair to those who quit for you the thronged and agitated city. And can it be, that those who exist within this enchanted domain, can think of anything but sweet air, and do aught but revel in the breath of perfumed flowers?’ And here he gained the garden-gate: so he stopped his soliloquy, and gave his horse to his groom.

CHAPTER V

A NEW CHARACTER

THE Marquess had preceded Vivian in his arrival about three or four days, and of course, to use the common phrase, the establishment 'was quite settled.' It was, indeed, to avoid the possibility of witnessing the domestic arrangements of a nobleman in any other point of view, save that of perfection, that Vivian had declined accompanying his noble friend to the Château. Mr. Grey, junior, was an epicurean, and all epicureans will quite agree with me, that his conduct on this head was extremely wise. I am not very nice myself about these matters; but there are, we all know, a thousand little things that go wrong on the *arrivals* of even the best regulated families; and to mention no others, for any rational being voluntarily to encounter the awful gaping of an English family, who have travelled one hundred miles in ten successive hours, appears to me to be little short of madness.

'Grey, my boy, quite happy to see ye!—later than I expected; first bell rings in five minutes—Sadler will show you your room. Father, I hope, quite well?'

Such was the salutation of the Marquess; and Vivian accordingly retired to arrange his toilet.

The first bell rang, and the second bell rang, and Vivian was seated at the dinner-table. He bowed to the Marchioness, and asked after her poodle, and gazed with some little curiosity at the vacant chair opposite him.

'Mrs. Felix Lorraine—Mr. Vivian Grey,' said the Marquess, as a Lady entered the room.

Now, although I am one of those historians, who are of opinion that the nature of the personages they celebrate, should be developed rather by a recital of their conduct, than by a set character *au commencement*; I feel it, nevertheless, incumbent upon me to devote a few lines to the Lady who has just entered, which the reader will

be so good as to get through, while she is accepting an offer of some white soup ; by this means he will lose none of the conversation.

The Honourable Felix Lorraine, we have before laconically described as a *roué*. To the initiated, I need say no more ; they will all know what sort of a person a *roué* must be who has the honour of being the son of an English Earl. To the uninitiated, I shall only observe, that after having passed through a career with tolerable credit, which would have blasted the character of any common personage, Felix Lorraine ended by pigeoning a young nobleman, whom, for that purpose, he had made his intimate friend. The affair got wind—after due examination, was proclaimed, ‘*too bad*,’ and the guilty personage was visited with the heaviest vengeance of modern society—he was expelled his club. By this unfortunate exposure, Mr. Felix Lorraine was obliged to give in a match, which was on the *tapis*, with the celebrated Miss Mexico, on whose million he had determined to set up a character and a chariot, and at the same time pension his mistress, and subscribe to the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Felix left for the Continent, and in due time was made drum-major at Barbadoes, or fiscal at Ceylon, or something of that kind ; I forget which. While he loitered in Europe, he made a conquest of the heart of the daughter of some German baron, who was ambassador extraordinary from his Serene Highness the Palsgrave of * * * * to his most Supreme Excellency the Landgrave of * * * * and after six weeks passed in the most affectionate manner, each of the happy couple performing their respective duties with perfect propriety, Felix left Germany for his colonial appointment, and also left—his lady behind him.

Mr. Lorraine had duly and dutifully informed his family of his marriage ; and they, as amiably and affectionately, had never answered his letters, which he never expected they would. Profiting by their example, he never answered his wife’s, who, in due time, to the horror of the Marquess,

landed in England, and claimed the protection of her 'beloved husband's family.' The Marquess vowed he would never see her; the lady, however, one morning gained admittance, and from that moment she had never quitted her brother-in-law's roof, and not only had never quitted it, but now made the greatest favour of her staying.

The extraordinary influence which Mrs. Felix Lorraine possessed, was certainly not owing to her beauty, for the lady opposite Vivian Grey had apparently no claims to admiration on the score of her personal qualifications. Her complexion was bad, and her features were indifferent, and these characteristics were not rendered less uninterestingly conspicuous by what makes an otherwise ugly woman, quite the reverse, namely, a pair of expressive eyes; for certainly this epithet could not be applied to those of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, which gazed in all the vacancy of German listlessness.

The Lady *did* bow to Mr. Grey, and that was all; and then she negligently spooned her soup, and then after much parade, sent it away untouched. As Vivian dined with the Marchioness, he was not under the necessity of paying any immediate courtesy to his opposite neighbour, whose silence, he plainly perceived, was for the nonce, and consequently for him. But the day was hot, and Vivian had been fatigued by his ride, and the Marquess's champagne was excellent; and so, at last, the floodgates of his speech burst, and talk he *did*. He complimented her Ladyship's poodle, quoted German to Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and taught the Marquess to eat cabinet pudding with curaçoâ sauce (a custom which, by the bye, I recommend to all); and then his sentiment;—stories for the Marquess, scandal for the Marchioness, and sentiment for the Marquess's sister! That lady, who began to find out her man, had no mind to be longer silent, and although a perfect mistress of the English language, began to articulate a horrible patois, that she might not be mistaken for an Englishwoman, an occurrence which she particularly dreaded. But now came her punishment, for Vivian

saw the effect which he had produced on Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and that Mrs. Felix Lorraine now wished to produce a corresponding effect upon him, and this he was determined she should not do ; so new stories followed, and new compliments ensued, and finally he anticipated her sentences, and sometimes her thoughts. The lady sat silent and admiring ! At last the important meal was finished, and the time came when good dull English dames retire ; but of this habit Mrs. Felix Lorraine did not approve ; and although she had not yet prevailed upon Lady Carabas to adopt her ideas on field days, still en domestique, the good-natured Marchioness had given in, and to save herself from hearing the din of male voices at a time, at which during her whole life she had been unaccustomed to them, the Marchioness of Carabas—dozed. Her worthy spouse, who was prevented by the presence of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, from talking politics with Vivian, passed the bottle pretty briskly, and then conjecturing that ‘from the sunset we should have a fine day to-morrow,’ fell back in his easy chair, and—snored.

Mrs. Felix Lorraine looked at her noble relatives, and shrugged up her shoulders with an air which bafflETH all description. ‘Mr. Grey, I congratulate you on this hospitable reception ; you see we treat you quite *en famille*. Come ! ’tis a fine evening, you have seen, as yet, but little of Château Désir : we may as well enjoy the fine air on the Terrace.’

CHAPTER VI

THE TERRACE

‘**Y**OU must know, Mr. Grey, that this is my favourite walk, and I therefore expect that it will be yours.’

‘It cannot indeed fail to be such, the favourite as it alike is, of Nature, and Mrs. Felix Lorraine.’

‘On my word, a very pretty sentence!—and who taught you, young gentleman, to bandy words so fairly?’

‘I never can open my mouth, except in the presence of a woman,’ bolted out Vivian, with the most impudent mendacity, and he looked interesting and innocent.

‘Indeed!—and what do you know about such wicked work, *as talking to women?*’ and here Mrs. Felix Lorraine imitated Vivian’s sentimental voice. ‘Do you know,’ she continued, ‘I feel quite happy that you have come down here;—I begin to think that we shall be very great friends.’

‘Nothing appears to me more evident,’ said Vivian.

‘How delicious is friendship,’ exclaimed Mrs. Felix Lorraine: ‘delightful sentiment, that prevents life from being a curse! Have you a friend, Mr. Vivian Grey?’

‘Before I answer that question, I should like to know what meaning Mrs. Felix Lorraine attaches to that important monosyllable, *friend*.’

‘Oh, you want a definition; I hate definitions; and of all the definitions in the world, the one I’ve been most unfortunate in, has been a definition of friendship,—I might say’—and here her voice sunk,—‘I might say, of all the sentiments in the world, friendship is the one which has been most fatal to me; but I must not inoculate you with my bad spirits, bad spirits are not for young blood like yours, leave them to old persons like myself.’

‘Old!’ said Vivian, in a proper tone of surprise.

‘Old! ay *old*,—how old do you think I am?’

‘You may have seen twenty summers,’ gallantly conjectured Vivian.

The lady looked pleased, and almost insinuated, that she had seen one or two more. Mrs. Felix Lorraine was about thirty.

‘A clever woman,’ thought Vivian, ‘but vain; I hardly know what to think of her.’

‘Mr. Grey, I fear you find me in bad spirits to-day; but, alas! I—I have cause. Although we see each other to-day for the first time, yet there is something in your

manner, something in the expression of your eyes, that make me believe *my* happiness is not altogether a matter of indifference to *you*.' These words, uttered in one of the sweetest voices by which ever human being was fascinated, were slowly and deliberately spoken, as if it were intended that they should *rest* on the ear of the object to whom they were addressed.

'My dear Mrs. Lorraine! it is impossible that *I* can have but one sentiment with regard to you, that of

'Of *what*, Mr. Grey?'

'Of solicitude for your welfare.'

The lady gently took the arm of the young man, and then with an agitated voice, and a troubled spirit, dwelt upon the unhappiness of her lot, and the cruelty of her fortunes. Her husband's indifference was the sorrowful theme of her lamentations; and she ended by asking Mr. Vivian Grey's advice, as to the line of conduct which she should pursue with regard to him; first duly informing Vivian, that this was the *only* time, and he the *only* person, to whom this subject had been ever mentioned.

'And why should I mention it here—and to whom? The Marquess is the best of men, but—' and here she looked up in Vivian's face, and spoke volumes; 'and the Marchioness is the most amiable of women,—at least, I suppose her lap-dog thinks so.'

The advice of Vivian was very concise. He sent the husband to the devil in two seconds, and insisted upon the wife's not thinking of him for another moment; and then the lady dried her eyes, and promised to do her best.

'And now,' said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, 'I must talk about your own affairs—I think your plan *excellent*.'

'Plan! Madam.'

'Yes, *plan*, Sir! the Marquess has told me *all*. I have no head for politics, Mr. Grey; but if I cannot assist you in managing the nation, I perhaps *may* in managing the family, and my services are at your command. Believe me, you'll have enough to do:

there, I pledge you my troth. Do you think it a pretty hand?’

Vivian did think it a very pretty hand, and he performed due courtesies in a very gallant style.

‘And now, good even to you,’ said the lady; ‘this little gate leads to my apartments. You’ll have no difficulty in finding your way back’:—so saying, she disappeared.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY RISING

WHEN Vivian retired to his room, he found a notellette on his dressing-case, which contained two lines. They were as follows:—
‘*A walk on the terrace before breakfast, is the fashion at Château Désir.*’ The esprit of the note sufficiently indicated the authoress, even if the perfumed paper, and the diminutive French gem, with its piquant and *peculiar* motto, had allowed him, for an instant, to hesitate.

In spite of his travelling, and his champagne, and his sound sleep, Vivian rose early, and was on the Terrace at a most reasonable hour, at least for him: Mrs. Felix Lorraine was already there.

‘I congratulate Mr. Grey,’ said the lady, as she extended him a finger, ‘on being an early riser. Nothing is so vulgar as getting up late. Oh! what a pretty morning gown that is! and how nice your hair curls! and that velvet stock! why I declare you’ve quite a taste in *costume*! but it does not set quite right. *There*, that’s better,’ said Mrs. Lorraine, adjusting the stock for him, ‘not much beard yet, I see; you must take care to have one before you’re a—*privy counsellor*.’

‘I rejoice,’ said Vivian, ‘that I can in return sincerely compliment you on your own good taste in costume. That buckle is, of course, fresh from Berlin, or—Birming-

ham—it's all the same, you know, at least at Howell and James's; and of all things in the world, what I most admire, are your black velvet slippers! But, where's the Marquess?'

'Oh! we're not very early honoured with the presence of the Marquess of Carabas in his own house.'

'Why, what do you mean?'

'Oh! I mean nothing, except that the future minister never rises till noon—bad habits, Mr. Grey, for a man of business!'

'Bad habits, indeed! we must endeavour to cure him, now that he's going, as you say, to be a man of business.'

'Oh, certainly! cure him by all means. He'll give you, I don't doubt, plenty of occupation. I advise you regularly to reform the whole house. Your influence is so great, that you can do anything with the Marquess. Well, I hope he'll behave better in *future*, for the Castle will be full in a few days. There are the Courtowns coming, and Sir Berdmore and Lady Scrope, and the Beaconsfields—all next week; and crowds of all sorts of people, whose names I forget, pawns in the great game of chess, which is to be played by Vivian Grey, Esq. and the most noble the Marquess of Carabas—against all England. There, there's the breakfast bell; I hope your appetite's good.'

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST WEEK

THE first week at Château Désir, passed pleasantly enough. Vivian's morning was amply occupied in maturing with the Marquess the grand principles of the new political system: in weighing interests, in balancing connections, and settling 'what side was to be taken on the *great questions?*' Oh! politics, thou splendid juggle!—The whole business, although so

magnificent in its result, appeared very easy to the two counsellors, for it was one of the first principles of Mr. Vivian Grey, '*that everything was possible.*' Men did fail in life to be sure, and after all, very little *was* done by the generality ; but still all these failures, and all this inefficiency, might be traced to a want of physical and mental courage. Some men were bold in their conceptions, and splendid heads at a grand system, but then, when the day of battle came, they turned out very cowards ; while others, who had nerve enough to stand the brunt of the hottest fire, were utterly ignorant of military tactics, and fell before the destroyer, like the brave untutored Indians, before the civilised European. Now Vivian Grey was conscious, that there was at least *one* person in the world, who was no craven either in body or in mind, and so he had long come to the comfortable conclusion, that it was impossible that his career could be anything, but the most brilliant. And truly, employed as he now was, with a peer of the realm, in a solemn consultation on that realm's most important interests, at a time when creatures of his age were moping in Halls and Colleges, is it to be wondered at, that he began to imagine that his theory was borne out by experience, and by fact ? Not that it must be supposed, even for a moment, that Vivian Grey was, what the world calls, *conceited*.---Oh, no ! he knew the measure of his own mind, and had fathomed the depth of his powers with equal skill and impartiality ; but in the process he could not but feel, that he *could* conceive *much*, and *dare* do *more*.

I said the first week at Château Désir passed pleasantly enough ; and so it did, for Vivian's soul revelled in the morning councils on his future fortunes, with as much eager joy, as a young courser tries the turf, preliminary to running for the plate. And then, in the evening, were moonlit walks with Mrs. Felix Lorraine ! and then the lady abused England so prettily, and initiated her companion in all the secrets of German Courts, and sang beautiful French songs, and told the legends of her

native land in such an interesting, semi-serious tone, that Vivian almost imagined that she believed them—and then she would take him beside the luminous lake in the park, and vow it looked just like the dark blue Rhine! and then she remembered Germany, and grew sad, and abused her husband; and then she taught Vivian the guitar, and—some other fooleries besides.

CHAPTER IX

TACTICS

THE second week of Vivian's visit had come round, and the flag waved proudly on the proud tower of Château Désir, indicating to the admiring county, that the most noble Sidney, Marquess of Carabas, held public days twice a week at his grand Castle. And now came the neighbouring peer, full of grace and gravity, and the mellow baronet, with his hearty laugh, and the jolly country squire, and the middling gentry, and the jobbing country attorney, and the flourishing country surveyor—some honouring by their presence, some who felt the obligation equal, and others bending before the noble host, as if paying him adoration, was almost an equal pleasure with that of guzzling his venison pasties, and quaffing his bright wines.

Independent of all these periodical visitors, the house was full of permanent ones. There was the Viscount and Viscountess Courtown, and their three daughters, and Lord and Lady Beaconsfield, and their three sons, and Sir Berdmore and Lady Scrope, and Colonel Delmington of the Guards, and Lady Louisa Manvers, and her daughter Julia. Lady Louisa was the only sister of the Marquess—a widow, proud and penniless.

To all these distinguished personages, Vivian was introduced by the Marquess as 'a monstrous clever young man, and his Lordship's most particular friend'—and

then the noble Carabas left the game in his young friend's hands.

And right well Vivian did his duty. In a week's time it would have been hard to decide with whom of the family of the Courtowns Vivian was the greatest favourite. He rode with the Viscount, who was a good horseman, and was driven by his Lady, who was a good whip; and when he had sufficiently admired the tout ensemble of her Ladyship's pony phaeton, he entrusted her, '*in confidence*,' with some ideas of his own about Martingales, a subject which he assured her Ladyship 'had been the object of his mature consideration.' The three honourable Misses were the most difficult part of the business; but he talked sentiment with the first, sketched with the second, and romped with the third.

Ere the Beaconsfields could be jealous of the influence of the Courtowns, Mr. Vivian Grey had promised his Lordship, who was a collector of medals, an unique, which had never yet been heard of; and her Ladyship, who was a collector of autographs, the private letters of every man of genius that ever had been heard of. In this division of the Carabas guests, he was not bored with a family; for *sons*, he always made it a rule to cut dead; they are the members of a family who, on an average, are generally very uninfluential, for, on an average, they are fools enough to think it very knowing, to be very disagreeable. So the wise man but little loves them, but woe to the fool who neglects the daughters!

Sir Berdmore Scrope, Vivian found a more unmanageable personage; for the baronet was confoundedly shrewd, and without a particle of sentiment in his composition. It was a great thing, however, to gain him; for Sir Berdmore was a leading country gentleman, and having quarrelled with Ministers about the corn laws, had been accounted disaffected ever since. The baronet, however, although a bold man to the world, was luckily henpecked; so Vivian made love to the wife, and secured the husband.

CHAPTER X

MARRIAGE

I THINK that Julia Manvers was really the most beautiful creature that ever smiled in this fair world. Such a symmetrically formed shape, such perfect features, such a radiant complexion, such luxuriant auburn hair, and such blue eyes, lit up by a smile of such mind and meaning, have seldom blessed the gaze of admiring man! Vivian Grey, fresh as he was, was not exactly the creature to lose his heart very speedily. He looked upon marriage as a certain farce in which, sooner or later, he was, as a well-paid actor, to play his part; and could it have advanced his views one jot, he would have married the Princess Caraboo to-morrow. But of all wives in the world, a young and handsome one was that which he most dreaded; and how a statesman, who was wedded to a beautiful woman, could possibly perform his duties to the public, did most exceedingly puzzle him. Notwithstanding, however, these sentiments, Vivian began to think that there really could be no harm in talking to so beautiful a creature as Julia, and a little conversation with her would, he felt, be no unpleasing relief to the difficult duties in which he was involved.

To the astonishment of the Honourable Buckhurst Stanhope, eldest son of Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Vivian Grey, who had never yet condescended to acknowledge his existence, asked him one morning, with the most fascinating of smiles, and with the most conciliating voice, 'whether they should ride together?' The young heir-apparent looked stiff, and assented. He arrived again at Château Désir in a couple of hours, desperately enamoured of the eldest Miss Courtown. The sacrifice of two mornings to the Honourable Dormer Stanhope, and the Honourable Gregory Stanhope, sent them home equally au désespoir as to the remaining sisters. Having

thus, like a man of honour, provided for the amusement of his former friends, the three Miss Courtowns, Vivian left Mrs. Felix Lorraine to the Colonel, whose moustache, by the bye, that lady considerably patronised, and then, having excited an universal feeling of gallantry among the elders, Vivian found his whole day at the service of Julia Manvers.

‘Miss Manvers, I think that you and I are the only faithful subjects in this Castle of Indolence. Here am I lounging on an ottoman, my ambition reaching only so far as the possession of a cigar, whose aromatic and circling wreaths I candidly confess, I dare not here excite; and you, of course, much too knowing to be doing anything on the first of August, save dreaming of races, archery feats, and county balls—the three most delightful things which the country can boast, either for man, woman, or child.’

‘Of course, you except sporting for yourself—shooting especially, I suppose.’

‘Shooting, oh! ah! there is such a thing. No, I’m no shot;—not that I have not in my time cultivated a Manton; but the truth is, having, at an early age, mistaken my most intimate friend for a cock pheasant, I sent a whole crowd of “*fours*” into his face, and thereby spoilt one of the prettiest countenances in Christendom; so I gave up the field. Besides, as Tom Moore says, I have so much to do in the country, that, for my part, I really have no time for killing birds and jumping over ditches: good work enough for country squires, who must, like all others, have their hours of excitement. Mine are of a different nature, and boast a different locality; and so when I come into the country, ’tis for pleasant air, and beautiful trees, and winding streams, things, which, of course, those who live all the year round among, do not suspect to be lovely and adorable creations. Don’t you agree with Tom Moore, Miss Manvers?’

‘Oh, of course! but I think it’s very improper, that

habit, that every one has, of calling a man of such eminence as the author of *Lalla Rookh*, *Tom Moore*.'

'I wish he could but hear you! But, suppose I were to quote *Mr. Moore*, or *Mr. Thomas Moore*, would you have the most distant conception whom I meant? No, no, certainly not. By the bye, did you ever hear the pretty name they gave him at Paris?'

'No! what was it?'

'One day, Moore and Rogers went to call on Denon. Rogers gave their names to the Swiss, *Monsieur Rogers et Monsieur Moore*. The Swiss dashed open the library-door, and, to the great surprise of the illustrious antiquary, announced, *Monsieur l'Amour*! While Denon was doubting whether the God of Love was really paying him a visit or not, *Rogers* entered. I should like to have seen Denon's face!'

'And Monsieur Denon did take a portrait of Mr. Rogers as Cupid, I believe, Mr. Grey?'

'Come, Madam, "no scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope." Mr. Rogers is one of the most elegant-minded men in the country.'

'Nay! don't lecture me with such a *riant* face, or else your *morale* will be utterly thrown away.'

'Ah! you have Retsch's Faust there. I did not expect on a drawing-room table at Château Désir, to see anything so old, and so excellent. I thought the third edition of Tremain would be a very fair specimen of your ancient literature, and Major Denham's hair-breadth escapes of your modern. There was an excellent story about town, on the return of Denham and Clapperton. The travellers took different routes, in order to arrive at the same point of destination. In his wanderings, the Major came unto an unheard-of Lake, which, with the spirit, which they of the Guards surely approved, he christened "*Lake Waterloo*." Clapperton arrived a few days after him; and the pool was immediately re-baptized "*Lake Trafalgar*." There was a hot quarrel in consequence. Now, if I had been there,

I would have arranged matters, by proposing as a title to meet the views of all parties, "*The United Service Lake.*"

'That would certainly have been very happy.'

'How beautiful Margaret is!' said Vivian, rising from his ottoman, and seating himself on the sofa by the lady. 'I always think, that this is the only Personification where Art has not rendered Innocence insipid.'

'Do you think so?'

'Why, take Una in the Wilderness, or Goody Two Shoes. These, I believe, were the most innocent persons that ever existed, and I'm sure you will agree with me, they always look the most insipid. Nay, perhaps I was wrong in what I said; perhaps it is Insipidity that always looks innocent, not Innocence always insipid.'

'How can you refine so, Mr. Grey, when the thermometer is at 250°! Pray, tell me some more stories.'

'I cannot, I'm in a refining humour: I could almost lecture to-day at the Royal Institution. You would not call these exactly Prosopopeias of Innocence?' said Vivian, turning over a bundle of Stewart Newton's beauties, languishing, and lithographed. 'Newton, I suppose, like Lady Wortley Montague, is of opinion, that the face is not the most beautiful part of woman; at least, if I am to judge from these elaborate ankles. Now the countenance of this Donna, forsooth, has a drowsy placidity worthy of the easy-chair she is lolling in, and yet her ankle would not disgrace the contorted frame of the most pious Faquir.'

'Well! I'm an admirer of Newton's paintings.'

'Oh! so am I. He's certainly a cleverish fellow, but rather too much among the blues; a set, of whom, I would venture to say, Miss Manvers knoweth little about?'

'Oh, not the least! Mamma does not visit that way. What are they?'

'Oh, very powerful people! though "*Mamma does not visit that way.*" They live chiefly about Cumber-

land Gate. Their words are Ukases as far as Curzon Street, and very Decretals in the general vicinity of May Fair; but you shall have a further description another time. How those rooks bore! I hate staying with ancient families; you're always *cawed* to death. If ever you write a novel, Miss Manvers, mind you have a rookery in it. Since Tremaine, and Washington Irving, nothing will go down without.'

'Oh! by the bye, Mr. Grey, who *is* the author of Tremaine?'

'I'll tell you who is *not*.'

'Who?'

'Mr. Ogle.'

'But, really, who *is* the author?'

'Oh! I'll tell you in a moment. It's either Mr. Ryder, or Mr. Spencer Percival, or Mr. Dyson, or Miss Dyson, or Mr. Bowles, or the Duke of Buckingham, or Mr. Ward, or a young Officer in the Guards, or an old Clergyman in the North of England, or a middle-aged Barrister on the Midland Circuit.'

'You're really so giddy, Mr. Grey,—I wish you could get me an autograph of Mr. Washington Irving; I want it for a particular friend.'

'Give me a pen and ink; I'll write you one immediately.'

'Oh! Mr. Grey.'

'There! now you've made me blot Faustus.'

At this moment the room-door suddenly opened, and as suddenly shut.

'Who was that, Mr. Grey?'

'Mephistophiles, or Mrs. Felix Lorraine; one or the other,—perhaps *both*.'

'Mr. Grey!'

'What do you think of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, Miss Manvers?'

'Oh! I think her a very amusing woman, a very clever woman, a very—but——'

'But what?'

‘But I can’t exactly make her out.’

‘Nor I, nor I—she’s a dark riddle; and, although I am a very *Œdipus*, I confess I have not yet unravelled it. Come, there’s Washington Irving’s autograph for you; read it, isn’t it quite in character? Shall I write any more? One of Sir Walter’s, or Mr. Southey’s, or Mr. Milman’s, or Mr. D’Israeli’s? or shall I sprawl a Byron?’

‘Mr. Grey! I really cannot patronise such unprincipled conduct. You may make me one of Sir Walter’s, however.’

‘Poor Washington, poor Washington!’ said Vivian, writing; ‘I knew him well in London. He always slept at dinner. One day, as he was dining at Mr. Hallam’s, they took him, when asleep, to Lady Jersey’s rout; and, to see the *Sieur Geoffrey*, when he opened his eyes in the illumined saloons, was really quite admirable! quite an Arabian tale!’

‘Oh, how delightful! I should have so liked to have seen him! He seems quite forgotten now in England. How came we to talk of him?’

‘Forgotten—oh! he spoilt his elegant talents in writing German and Italian twaddle with all the rawness of a Yankee. He ought never to have left America, at least in literature:—there was an uncontested and glorious field for him. He should have been managing Director of the Hudson Bay Company, and lived all his life among the beavers.’

‘I think there’s nothing more pleasant, Mr. Grey, than talking over the season in the country, in August.’

‘Nothing more agreeable. It was dull, though, last season, very dull; I think the game cannot be kept going another year. If it wasn’t for the General Election, we really must have a war for variety’s sake. Peace gets quite a bore. Everybody you dine with commands a good *cuisine*, and gives you twelve different wines, all perfect. And as for Dr. Henderson, he is the amateur importer for the whole nation. We cannot bear this any longer; all the lights and shadows of life are lost. The only good

thing I heard this year, was an ancient gentlewoman going up to Gunter, and asking him for "the receipt for that white stuff," pointing to his Roman punch. I, who am a great man for receipts, gave it her immediately :—
" *One hod of mortar to one bottle of Noyau.*"

'Oh, that was too bad ! and did she thank you ?'

'Thank me ! ay, truly ; and pushed a card into my hand, so thick and sharp, that it cut through my glove. I wore my arm in a sling for a month afterwards.'

'And what was the card ?'

'Oh, you need not look so arch ! The old lady was not even a faithless duenna. It was an invitation to an assembly, or something of the kind, at a *locale*, somewhere, as Theodore Hook, or John Wilson Croker, would say, "between Mesopotamia and Russell Square."

'Do you know Mr. Croker, Mr. Grey ?'

'Not in the least. I look upon Mr. Croker and myself as the two sublimest men in the United Kingdom. When we do meet, the interview will be interesting.'

'Pray, Mr. Grey, is it true that all the houses in Russell Square are tenantless ?'

'Quite true ; the Marquess of Tavistock has given up the county in consequence. A perfect shame—is it not ? Let's write it up.'

'An admirable plan ! but we'll take the houses first ; of course we can get them at a pepper-corn rent.'

'What a pity, Miss Manvers, the fashion has gone out of selling oneself to the devil.'

'Good gracious, Mr. Grey !'

'On my honour, I am quite serious. It does appear to me to be a very great pity. What a capital plan for younger brothers ! It's a kind of thing I've been trying to do all my life, and never could succeed. I began at school with toasted cheese and a pitch-fork ; and since then I've invoked, with all the eloquence of Goethe, the evil one in the solitude of the Hartz ; but without success. I think I should make an excellent bargain with him : of course, I don't mean that ugly vulgar savage with a

fiery tail. Oh, no ! Satan himself for me, a perfect gentleman ! Or Belial,—Belial would be the most delightful. He's the fine genius of the Inferno, I imagine, the Béranger of Pandemonium.'

'Mr. Grey, I really cannot listen to such nonsense one moment longer. What would you have if Belial were here ?'

'Let us see. Now, you shall act the spirit, and I, Vivian Grey. I wish we had a shorthand writer here to take down the Incantation Scene. We'd send it to Arnold—*Commençons*—Spirit ! I'll have a fair castle.'

The lady bowed.

'I'll have a palace in town.'

The lady bowed.

'I'll have lots of the best Havannah cigars.'

The lady bowed.

'I'll have a fair wife. — Why, Miss Manvers, you forget to bow !'

'Oh, dear ! Mr. Grey, I really beg your pardon !'

'Come, this *is* a novel way of making an offer, and, I hope, a successful one.'

'Julia, my dear,' cried a voice in the verandah, 'Julia, my dear, I want you to walk with me.'

'Say you are engaged with the Marchioness,' whispered Vivian, with a low but distinct voice ; his eyes fixed on the table, and his lips not appearing to move.

'Mamma, I'm——'

'I want you immediately and *particularly*, Julia,' cried Lady Louisa, with an earnest voice.

'I'm coming, I'm coming. You see I *must* go, Mr. Grey.'

CHAPTER XI

THE PARK

‘CONFUSION on that old hag ! Her eye looked evil on me, at the very moment ! Although a pretty wife is really the destruction of a young man’s prospects, still, in the present case, the niece of my friend, my *patron*—high family—perfectly unexceptionable, etc., etc., etc. Such blue eyes ! upon my honour, this must be an exception to the general rule.’ Here a light step attracted his attention, and, on turning round, he found Mrs. Felix Lorraine at his elbow.

‘Oh ! you’re *here* ! Mr. Grey, acting the Solitaire in the park. I want your opinion about a passage in “Herman and Dorothea.”’

‘My opinion is always at your service ; but, if the passage is not perfectly clear to Mrs. Felix Lorraine, it will be perfectly obscure, I am convinced, to me.’

‘Ah ! yes of course. Oh, dear ! after all my trouble, I’ve forgotten my book. How mortifying ! Well, I’ll show it you after dinner : adieu !—and, by the bye, Mr. Grey, as I am here, I may as well advise you not to spoil all the Marquess’s timber, by carving a certain person’s name on his park trees. I think your plans in that quarter are admirable. I’ve been walking with Lady Louisa the whole morning, and you can’t think how I puffed you ! *Courage, Cavalier*, and we shall soon be connected, not only in friendship, but in blood.’

The next morning at breakfast, Vivian was surprised to find that the Manvers party was suddenly about to leave the Castle. All were disconsolate at their departure, for there was to be a grand entertainment at Château Désir that very day ; but particularly Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and Mr. Vivian Grey. The sudden departure was accounted for by the arrival of ‘unexpected,’ etc., etc., etc. There was no hope,—the green post-chariot was at the

door—a feeble promise of a speedy return ; Julia's eyes were filled with tears. Vivian was springing forward to press her hand, and bear her to the carriage, when Mrs. Felix Lorraine—seized his arm, vowed she was going to faint, and, ere she could recover herself, or loosen her grasp, the Manvers—were gone.

CHAPTER XII

A MORNING VISIT

THE gloom which the parting had diffused over all countenances, was quite dispelled when the Marquess entered.

'Lady Carabas,' said he, 'you must prepare for crowds of visitors to-day. There are the Amershams, and Lord Alhambra, and Ernest Clay, and twenty other young heroes, who, duly informed that the Miss Courtowns were honouring us with their presence, are pouring in from all quarters—Isn't it so, Juliana?' gallantly asked the Marquess of Miss Courtown: 'but who do you think is coming besides?'

'Who, who?' exclaimed all.

'Nay, you shall guess,' said the peer.

'The Duke of Waterloo?' guessed Cynthia Courtown, the romp.

'Prince Hungary?' asked her sister Laura.

'Is it a gentleman?' asked Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

'No, no, you're all wrong, and all very stupid. It is Mrs. Million.'

'Oh, how delightful!' said Cynthia.

'Oh, how annoying!' said the Marchioness.

'You need not look so agitated, my love,' said the Marquess; 'I have written to Mrs. Million, to say that we shall be most happy to see her; but as the Castle is very full, she must not come with fifty carriages in four, as she did last year.'

‘And will Mrs. Million dine with us in the hall, Marquess?’ asked Cynthia Courtown.

‘Mrs. Million will do what she likes; I only know that I shall dine in the hall, whatever happens, and whoever comes; and so, I suppose, will Miss Cynthia Courtown?’

Vivian rode out alone, immediately after breakfast, to cure his melancholy by a hard gallop. He left his horse to choose its own road; and at length he found himself plunged in a corn-field.

‘Halloo, sir! beg pardon; but your horse’s feet will do no good to that standing corn; for when there’s plenty of roads to ride over—my maxim is—keep out of inclosures.’

Vivian turned round, and recognised a friend in the person of a substantial and neighbouring farmer.

Daniel Groves, or as he was commonly called *Mister Groves*, was one of those singular personages whose eccentricities procure them, from all the surrounding neighbourhood, the reputation of being ‘quite a character.’ Daniel was a stout-built, athletic man, with a fine florid countenance, and a few grey hairs straggling over his forehead, and beautifully contrasting with his carnationed complexion. His hazel eyes were very small, but they twinkled with perpetual action. A turned-up nose gave his countenance a somewhat conceited expression; and as he was in the habit of being *consulted* by the whole county, this expression became so habitual, that Mr. Groves always looked as if he himself quite agreed with the general opinion—that he was ‘one of the most long-headed fellows in these parts,’ and ‘quite a character.’ Daniel was not only opulent but flourishing; but he was not above attending to all the details of his farm, though frequently admitted to the tables of the principal neighbouring gentry.

But by this time Mister Groves, with a peculiarly large pet pitchfork over one shoulder, and a handful of corn in the other hand, with which he occasionally nourished

his ample frame in his toilsome march over the stubble, has reached the trespasser.

‘What ! is it you, Mr. Grey ? who thought of seeing you here ?’

‘Oh ! Mr. Groves, I wasn’t aware I was trespassing on your corn.’

‘Oh ! no matter, no matter : friends are always welcome, that’s my maxim. But if you could keep a *leettle* nearer to the hedge.’

‘Oh ! I’ll come out immediately. Which way are you going ? I’ve been thinking of calling on you.’

‘Well now, do, Sir ; ride home with me and take a bit of something to eat. My mistress will be remarkable glad to see you. There’s some nice cold pickled pork—we’ve an excellent cheese in cut ; and as fine a barrel of ale in broach as you ever tasted.’

‘Why, Groves ! really I cannot turn back to-day, for I want to look in at Conyers, and ask him about that trout stream.’

‘Well, Sir ! I’m sorry you’re so pushed, but I do wish you’d come in some day quite promiscuous. You said you would, for I want your opinion of some port wine I’m going to take with a friend.’

‘So I will with the greatest pleasure, but I’m not at all a good judge of port, it is too heavy for me ; I’d sooner taste your ale.’

‘Ah ! it’s the fashion of you young squires to cry down port wine ; but depend upon’t, it’s the *real* stuff. We never should have beat the French, if it hadn’t been for their poor sour wines. That’s my maxim.’

‘Shall you dine at the Château to-day ?’

‘Why you see the Markiss makes such a point of it, that I can’t well be off. And the county should be kept together sometimes.—That’s the ground I go upon.’

‘Oh ! do come—you must come—we cannot do without you : It’s nothing without you, Groves.’

‘Well, really, you’re very good to say so, so I can’t say but what I will ; but I hope there’ll be

something to eat and drink, which I know the name of, for the last time I 'tended, there was nothing but kick-shaws; my stomach's not used to such Frenchified messes, and I was altogether *no-howish* by the time I got home. I said to my mistress, "really," says I, "I don't know what's the matter with me, but my stomach's going remarkable wrong"; so she advised me to take a good stiff glass of brandy and water, while she got a couple of ducks roasted for supper, for peas were just in; sure enough that's all I wanted, for I slept well after it, and got up quite my own man again. There's nothing like a glass of brandy and water, cold, without sugar, when you're out of sorts. That's my maxim.'

'And a very good maxim too, Mr. Groves. I wish I could get you one of these mornings to look at a horse for me.'

'I shall be very glad. The one you're on seems rather weak in the fore-legs: I should blister him, if he belonged to me. But as to getting you a horse, why, it's the wrong time of year; and I'm so remarkably pushed on that point, that I hardly know what to say, but still I always like to do a good turn for a friend, that's my maxim, so I can't say but what I'll see about it. There's Harry Mounteney now, he wants me to ride over to Woodbury, to look at a brown mare; Stapylton Toad too, he says he's never satisfied without my opinion, though he generally takes his own in the long run. Ah! those Londoners know nothing about horseflesh. Well, any day you'll call, I'm your man.'

'Well, thank you, thank you, I shall keep you to your promise.'

'Well, Sir! good morning, pleasant ride to you. You'll keep to the roads, I'm sure, till harvest's in: though they mayn't be over good for a carriage, they're very fair for a bridle. That's the ground I stand upon.'

As Vivian was returning home, he intended to look in at a pretty cottage near the park, where lived one John

Conyers, an honest husbandman, and a great friend of Vivian's. This man had, about a fortnight ago, been of essential service to our hero, when a vicious horse, which he was endeavouring to cure of some ugly tricks, had nearly terminated his mortal career.

'Why are you crying so, my boy?' asked Vivian of a little Conyers, who was sobbing bitterly at the cottage door. He was answered only with desperate sobs. 'Is your father at home?'

'Oh, 'tis your honour!' said a decent-looking woman, who came out of the cottage; 'I thought they had come back again.'

'Come back again! why, what is the matter, dame?'

'Oh, your honour, we're in sad distress; there's been a seizure this morning, and I'm mortal fear'd the good man's beside himself!'

'Good Heavens! why did not you come to the castle? The Marquess surely never gave orders for the infliction of this misery.'

'Oh! your honour, we a'n't his Lordship's tenants no longer; there's been a change for Purley Mead, and now we're Lord Mounteney's people. John Conyers has been behind-hand ever sin he had the fever, but Mr. Sedgwick always gave time: but Lord Mounteney's gem'man says the system's bad, and so he'll put an end to it; and so all's gone, your honour; all's gone, and I'm mortal fear'd the good man's beside himself.'

'And who is Lord Mounteney's man of business?'

'Mr. Stapylton Toad,' sobbed the good dame.

'Here, boy, leave off crying, and hold my horse; keep your hold tight, but give him rein, he'll be quiet enough then. I will see honest John, dame Conyers.'

'I'm sure your honour's very kind, but I'm mortal feared the good man's beside himself, and he's apt to do very violent things when the fit's on him. He hasn't been so bad, since young Barton behaved so wickedly to his sister.'

‘Never mind ! I will see him ; there is nothing like a friend’s face in the hour of sorrow.’

‘I wouldn’t advise your honour,’ said the good dame, with a fearful expression of countenance ; ‘It’s an awful hour when the fit’s on him ; he knows not friend or foe, and scarcely knows me, your honour.’

‘Never mind, never mind, I’ll see him.’

Vivian entered the cottage,—but, oh ! the scene of desolation, who shall describe ? The room was entirely stripped, literally of everything ; there was nothing left, save the bare white-washed walls, and the red-tiled flooring. The room was darkened ; and seated on an old block of wood, which had been pulled out of the orchard, since the bailiff had left, was John Conyers. The fire was out, but his feet were still among the ashes. His head was buried in his hands, and bowed down nearly to his knees. The eldest girl, a fine sensible child of about thirteen, was sitting with two brothers on the floor in a corner of the room, motionless, their faces grave, and still as death, but tearless. Three young children, of an age too tender to know grief, were acting unmeaning gambols near the door.

‘Oh ! pray beware, your honour,’ earnestly whispered the poor dame, as she entered the cottage with the visitor.

Vivian walked up with a silent step to the end of the room, where John Conyers was sitting. He remembered this little room, when he thought it the very model of the abode of an English husbandman. The neat row of plates, and the well-scoured utensils, and the fine old Dutch clock, and the ancient and amusing ballad, purchased at some neighbouring fair, or of some itinerant bibliopole, and pinned against the wall—all, all were gone !

‘John Conyers !’ exclaimed Vivian.

There was no answer, nor did the miserable man appear in the slightest degree to be sensible of Vivian’s presence.

‘My good John Conyers !’

The man raised his head from his resting-place and turned to the spot whence the voice proceeded. There was such an unnatural fire in his eyes, that Vivian's spirit almost quailed. Any one, but Vivian Grey, would have fled the house. His alarm was not decreased when he perceived that the master of the cottage did not recognise him. The fearful stare was, however, short, and again the sufferer's face was hid.

The wife was advancing, but Vivian waved his hand to her to withdraw, and she accordingly fell into the background ; but her fixed eye did not leave her husband for a second.

'John Conyers, it is your friend, Mr. Vivian Grey, who is here,' said Vivian.

'Grey !' moaned the husbandman, 'Grey ! who is he ?'

'Your friend, John Conyers. Do you quite forget me ?' said Vivian advancing, and with a tone which Vivian Grey could alone assume.

'I think I have seen you, and you were kind,' and the face was again hid.

'And always will be kind, John Conyers. I have come to comfort you. I thought that a friend's voice would do you good in this hour of your affliction. Come, come, my good Conyers, cheer up, my man !' and Vivian dared to touch him. His hand was not repulsed. 'Do you remember what good service you did me when I rode white-footed Moll. Oh ! John Conyers, when the mare was plunging on the hill-top, I was much worse off than you are now ; and yet, you see, a friend came and saved me. You must not give way so, my good fellow. After all, a little management will set everything right,' and he took the husbandman's sturdy hand. John Conyers looked wildly round, but the unnatural fire that had glistened in his eye was extinguished.

'I do remember you,' he faintly cried ; 'I do remember you. *You* were always very kind.'

'And always will be, John Conyers ; always to friends

like you. Come, come, there's a man, cheer up and look about you, and let the sunbeam enter your cottage': and Vivian beckoned to the wife to open the closed shutter.

Conyers stared around him, but his eye rested only on bare walls, and the big tear coursed down his hardy cheek.

'Nay, never mind, man!' said Vivian, 'we'll soon have chairs and tables again. And as for the rent, think no more about that at present.'

The husbandman looked up to heaven, and then burst into the most violent hysterics. Vivian could scarcely hold down the powerful, and convulsed, frame of Conyers on his rugged seat; but the wife advanced from the back of the room, and her husband's head rested against her bosom. Vivian held his honest hand, and the eldest girl rose unbidden from her silent sorrow, and clung to her father's knee.

'The fit is over,' whispered the wife. 'There, there, there's a man, all is now well'; and Vivian left him resting on his wife's bosom.

'Here, you curly-headed rascal, scamper down to the village immediately, and bring up a basket of something to eat; and tell Morgan Price, that Mr. Grey says he is to send up a couple of beds, and some chairs here immediately, and some plates and dishes, and everything else, and don't forget a bottle of wine'; so saying, Vivian flung the urchin a sovereign.

'And now, dame Conyers, for Heaven's sake! light the fire. As for the rent, John Conyers, do not waste this trifle on *that*,' whispered Vivian, slipping his purse into his hand, 'for I will see Stapylton Toad, and get time. Why, woman, you'll never strike a light, if your tears drop so fast into the tinder-box. Here give it me. You're not fit for work to-day. And how is the trout in Ravely Mead, John, this hot weather? You know you never kept your promise with me. Oh! you are a sad fellow! There! there's a spark! I wonder why old Toad did not take the tinder-box. It is a very valuable piece of property, at least to us. Run and get

me some wood, that's a good boy. And so white-footed Moll is past all recovery? Well, she was a pretty creature! There, that will do famously,' said Vivian, fanning the flame with his hat. 'See, it mounts well! And now, God bless you all! for I'm an hour too late, and must scamper for my very life.'

CHAPTER XIII

THE ARRIVAL

MRS. MILLION arrived, and kept her promise; only three carriages and four! Out of the first descended the mighty lady herself, with some noble friends, who formed the most distinguished part of her suite: out of the second came her physician, Dr. Sly; her toad-eater, Miss Gusset; her secretary, and her page. The third carriage bore her groom of the chambers, and three female attendants. There were only two men servants to each equipage; nothing could be more moderate, or, as Miss Gusset said, 'in better taste.'

Mrs. Million, after having granted the Marquess a private interview in her private apartments, signified her imperial intention of dining in public, which, as she had arrived late, she trusted she might do in her travelling dress. The Marquess kotooed like a first-rate mandarin, and vowed 'that her will was his conduct.'

The whole suite of apartments was thrown open; and was crowded with guests. Mrs. Million entered; she was leaning on the Marquess's arm, and in a travelling dress, namely, a crimson silk pelisse, hat and feathers, with diamond earrings, and a rope of gold round her neck. A train of about twelve persons, consisting of her noble fellow travellers, toad-eaters, physicians, secretaries, etc., etc., etc. followed. The entrée of His Majesty could not have created a greater sensation, than did that of Mrs. Million. All fell back. Gartered peers, and starred

ambassadors, and baronets with titles older than the creation, and squires, to the antiquity of whose blood chaos was a novelty ; all retreated, with eyes that scarcely dared to leave the ground—even Sir Plantagenet Pure, whose family had refused a peerage regularly every century, now, for the first time in his life, seemed cowed, and in an awkward retreat to make way for the approaching presence, got entangled with the Mameluke boots of my Lord Alhambra.

At last, a sofa was gained, and the great lady was seated, and the sensation having somewhat subsided, conversation was resumed ; and the mighty Mrs. Million was not slightly abused, particularly by those who had bowed lowest at her entrée ; and now the Marquess of Carabas, as was wittily observed by Mr. Septimus Sessions, a pert young barrister, ‘went the circuit,’ that is to say, made the grand tour of the suite of apartments, making remarks to every one of his guests, and keeping up his influence in the county.

‘Ah, my Lord Alhambra ! this is too kind, and how is your excellent father, and my good friend ?—Sir Plantagenet, yours most sincerely ; we shall have no difficulty about that right of common.—Mr. Leverton, I hope you find the new plough work well—your son, sir, will do the county honour.—Sir Godfrey, I saw Barton upon that point, as I promised.—Lady Julia, I’m rejoiced to see ye at Château Désir, more blooming than ever !—Good Mr. Stapylton Toad, so that little change was effected !—My Lord Devildrain, this is a pleasure indeed !’

‘Why, Ernest Clay,’ said Mr. Buckhurst Stanhope, ‘I thought Alhambra wore a turban—I am quite disappointed.’

‘Not in the country, Stanhope ; here, he only sits cross-legged on an ottoman, and carves his venison with an ataghan.’

‘Well, I’m glad he doesn’t wear a turban—that would be bad taste, I think’ ; said Fool Stanhope. ‘Have you read his poem ?’

‘A little. He sent me a copy, and as I’m in the habit of lighting my cigar or so occasionally with a leaf, why I can’t help occasionally seeing a line—it seems quite first-rate.’

‘Indeed!’ said Fool Stanhope, ‘I must get it.’

‘My dear Puff! I am quite glad to find you here,’ said Mr. Cayenne, a celebrated reviewer, to Mr. Partenopex Puff, a small litterateur and smaller wit. ‘Have you seen Middle Ages lately?’

‘Not very lately,’ drawled Mr. Partenopex. ‘I breakfasted with him before I left town, and met a Professor Bopp there, a very interesting man, and Principal of the celebrated University of Heligoland, the model of the London.’

‘Ah! indeed! talking of the London, is Foaming Fudge to come in for Westmoreland?’

‘Doubtless! Oh! he is a prodigious fellow! What do you think Booby says? he says, that Foaming Fudge can do more than any man in Great Britain: that he had one day to plead in the King’s Bench, spout at a tavern, speak in the house, and fight a duel—and that he found time for everything but *the last*.’

‘Excellent!’ laughed Mr. Cayenne.

Mr. Partenopex Puff was reputed in a certain set, a sayer of good things, but he was a modest wit, and generally fathered his bon mots on his valet Booby, his monkey, or his parrot.

‘I saw you in the last number,’ said Cayenne. ‘From the quotations from your own works, I imagine the review of your own book was by yourself?’

‘What do you think Booby said?’

‘Mr. Puff, allow me to introduce you to Lord Alhambra,’ said Ernest Clay, by which means Mr. Puff’s servant’s last good thing was lost.

‘Mr. Clay, are you an archer?’ asked Cynthia Courtown.

‘No, fair Dian; but I can act Endymion.’

‘I don’t know what you mean—go away.’

‘Aubrey Vere, welcome to ——shire. Have you seen Prima Donna?’

‘No, is he here? How did you like his last song in the Age?’

‘*His* last song! Pooh! he only supplies the scandal.’

‘Groves,’ said Sir Hanway Etherington, ‘have you seen the newspaper this morning? Baron Crupper has tried fifteen men for horse stealing at York, and acquitted every one.’

‘Well then, Sir Hanway, I think his Lordship’s remarkable wrong; for when a man gets a horse to suit him, if he loses it, ’tish’t so easy to suit himself again. That’s the ground I stand upon.’

‘Well, there is a good deal in what you say, Groves. By the bye, have you let that nice house which your father used to live in?’

‘No, Sir Hanway, no! I keep it, in case anything should happen to Tom, for he’s getting a very likely young man, and he’ll be fittish to marry soon. That’s the ground I stand upon.’

All this time the Marquess of Carabas had wanted Vivian Grey twenty times, but that gentleman had not appeared. The important moment arrived, and his Lordship offered his arm to Mrs. Million, who, as the Gotha Almanack says, ‘takes precedence of all Arch-duchesses, Grand Duchesses, Duchesses, Princesses, Landgravines, Margravines, Palsgravines, etc., etc., etc.’

CHAPTER XIV

THE HALL

IN their passage to the Hall, the Marquess and Mrs. Million met Vivian Grey, booted and spurred, and covered with mud.

‘Oh!—Mrs. Million—Mr. Vivian Grey. How is this, my dear fellow? you will be too late.’

‘Immense honour!’ said Vivian, bowing to the ground to the lady. ‘Oh! my Lord, I was late, and made a short cut over Fearnley Bog. It has proved a very Moscow expedition. However I am keeping you. I shall be in time for the guava and liqueurs, and you know that is the only refreshment I ever take.’

‘Who is that, Marquess?’ asked Mrs. Million.

‘That is Mr. Vivian Grey, the most monstrous clever young man, and nicest fellow I know.’

‘He does indeed seem a very nice young man,’ said Mrs. Million; for she rather admired Vivian’s precocious taste for liqueurs.

I wish some steam process could be invented for arranging guests when they are above five hundred. In the present instance all went wrong when they entered the Hall; but, at last, the arrangements, which, of course, were of the simplest nature, were comprehended, and the guests were seated. There were three tables, each stretching down the Hall; the Dais was occupied by a military band. The number of guests, the contrast between the antique chamber and their modern costumes, the music, the various liveried menials, all combined to produce a tout ensemble, which at the same time was very striking, and ‘*in remarkable good taste.*’

In process of time, Mr. Vivian Grey made his entrée. There were a few vacant seats at the bottom of the table, ‘luckily for him,’ as kindly remarked Mr. Grumbleton. To the astonishment and indignation, however, of this worthy squire, the late comer passed by the unoccupied position, and proceeded onward with the most undaunted coolness, until he came to about the middle of the middle table, and which was nearly the best situation in the hall.

‘Beautiful Cynthia,’ said Vivian Grey, softly and sweetly whispering in Miss Courtown’s ear, ‘I am sure you will give up your place to me; you have nerve enough, you know, for *anything*, and would no more care for standing *out*, than I for sitting *in*.’ There’s nothing

like giving a romp credit for a little boldness. To keep up her character, she will out-herod Herod.

‘Oh! Grey, is it you? certainly, you shall have my place immediately—but I am not sure that we cannot make room for you. Dormer Stanhope, room must be made for Grey, or I shall leave the table immediately;—you men!’ said the hoyden, turning round to a set of surrounding servants, ‘push this form down, and put a chair between.’

The men obeyed. All who sat lower in the table on Miss Cynthia Courtown’s side, than that lady, were suddenly propelled downwards about the distance of two feet. Dr. Sly, who was flourishing an immense carving-knife and fork, preparatory to dissecting a very gorgeous haunch, had these fearful instruments suddenly precipitated into a trifle, from whose sugared trellis-work he found great difficulty in extricating them; while Miss Gusset, who was on the point of cooling herself with some exquisite iced jelly, found her frigid portion as suddenly transformed into a plate of peculiarly ardent curry, the property, but a moment before, of old Colonel Rangoon. Everything, however, receives a civil reception from a toad-eater, so Miss Gusset burnt herself to death by devouring a composition, which would have reduced any one to ashes who had not fought against Bundoolah.

‘Now, that’s what I call a very sensible arrangement;—what could go off better?’ said Vivian.

‘You may think so, Sir,’ said Mr. Boreall, a sharp-nosed and conceited-looking man, who, having got among a set whom he didn’t the least understand, was determined to take up Dr. Sly’s quarrel, merely for the sake of conversation. ‘You, I say, Sir, may think it so, but I rather imagine that the ladies and gentlemen lower down, can hardly think it *a very sensible arrangement*’; and here Boreall looked as if he had done his duty, in giving a young man a proper reproof.

Vivian glanced a look, which would have been annihilation to any one, not a freeholder of five hundred acres.

‘I had reckoned upon two deaths, Sir, when I entered the hall, and finding, as I do, that the whole business has apparently gone off without any fatal accident, why, I think the circumstances bear me out in my expression.’

Mr. Boreall was one of those unfortunate men who always take things *au pied de lettre*: he consequently looked amazed, and exclaimed, ‘Two deaths, Sir?’

‘Yes, Sir, two deaths; I reckoned, of course, on some corpulent parent being crushed to death in the scuffle, and then I should have had to shoot his son through the head for his filial satisfaction. Dormer Stanhope, I never thanked you for exerting yourself: send me that *fricandeau* you have just helped yourself to.’

Dormer, who was, as Vivian well knew, something of an epicure, looked rather annoyed, but by this time he was accustomed to Vivian Grey, and sent him the portion he had intended for himself—could epicure do more?

‘Whom are we among, bright Cynthia?’ asked Vivian.

‘Oh! an odd set,’ said the lady, looking dignified; ‘but you know we can be *exclusive*.’

‘*Exclusive*! pooh! trash—talk to everybody—it looks as if you were going to stand for the county. Have we any of the Millionaires near us?’

‘The Doctor and Toadey are lower down.’

‘Where is Mrs. Felix Lorraine?’

‘At the opposite table, with Ernest Clay.’

‘Oh! there’s Alhambra, next to Dormer Stanhope. Lord Alhambra, I am quite rejoiced to see you.’

‘Ah! Mr. Grey—I am quite rejoiced to see you. How is your father?’

‘Extremely well—he is at Paris—I heard from him yesterday. Do you ever see the Weimar Literary Gazette, my Lord?’

‘No;—why?’

‘There is a most admirable review of your poem, in the last number I have received.’

The young nobleman looked agitated. ‘I think, by

the style,' continued Vivian, 'that it is by Goethe. It is really quite delightful to see the oldest poet in Europe, dilating on the brilliancy of a new star in the poetical horizon.'

This was uttered with a perfectly grave voice, and now the young nobleman blushed—'Who is *Gewter*?' asked Mr. Boreall, who possessed such a thirst for knowledge, that he never allowed an opportunity to escape him of displaying his ignorance.

'A celebrated German writer,' lisped the modest Miss Macdonald, who was, of course, *beginning* German.

'I never heard his name,' persevered the indefatigable Boreall;—'how do you spell it?'

'G O E T H E,' relisped modesty.

'Oh! *Goty!*' exclaimed the querist—'I know him well: he wrote the Sorrows of Werter.'

'Did he, indeed, Sir?' asked Vivian, with the most innocent and inquiring face.

'Oh! don't you know that?' said Boreall;—'and poor stuff it is!' and here the worthy, and vulgar, landholder laughed loud and long.

'Lord Alhambra! I will take a glass of Johannisberg with you, if the Marquess's wines are in the state they *should* be—

"The Crescent warriors sipped their sherbet spiced,
For Christian men the various wines were *used*"

I always think that those are the two most admirable lines in your Lordship's poem,' said Vivian.

His Lordship did not exactly remember them: it would have been a wonder if he had:—but he thought Vivian Grey the most delightful fellow he ever met, and determined to ask him to Helicon Castle, for the Christmas holidays.

'Flat! flat!' said Vivian, as he dwelt upon the flavour of the Rhine's glory. 'Not exactly from the favourite binn of Prince Metternich, I think. By the bye, Dormer Stanhope, you have a taste that way; I will tell you two

secrets, which never forget : decant your Johannisberg, and ice your Maraschino. Ay, do not stare, my dear Gastronomer, but do it.'

'Oh, Vivian Grey, you little love ! why did not you come and speak to me ?' exclaimed a lady who was sitting at the side opposite Vivian, but much higher in the table.

'Ah ! adorable Lady Julia ! and so you were *done* on the grey filly.'

'*Done !*' said the sporting beauty with pouting lips ; 'but it is a long story, and I'll tell it you another time.'

'Ah ! do. How is Sir Peter ?'

'Oh ! he's had a fit or two since you saw him last.'

'Poor old gentleman ! let us drink his health' ; and the Baronet's recovery was quaffed by the lady, and Vivian with a very piquant expression of countenance.

'Do you know Lady Julia Knighton ?' asked Vivian of his neighbour. Before he could receive an answer, was again rattling on :—'This hall is bearable to dine in but I once breakfasted here, and I never shall forget the ludicrous effect produced by the sun through the ornate window. Such complexions ! Every one looked like a prize-fighter ten days after a battle. After all, painted glass is a bore ; I wish the Marquess would have it knocked out, and have plated.'

'Knock out the painted glass !' said Mr. Boreall ; 'well, I must confess I cannot agree with you.'

'I should have been extremely surprised if you could. If you do not insult that man, Miss Courtown, in ten minutes I shall be no more. I have already a nervous fever.'

'May I have the honour of taking a glass of Champagne with you, Mr. Grey ?' said Boreall.

'*Mr. Grey*, indeed !' muttered Vivian : 'Sir, I never drink anything but brandy.'

'Allow me to give *you* some Champagne, Miss,' resumed Boreall, as he attacked the modest Miss Macdonald ;

‘Champagne, you know,’ continued he, with a smile of agonising courtesy, ‘is quite the lady’s wine.’

‘Cynthia Courtown,’ whispered Vivian with a sepulchral voice, ‘’tis all over with me—I have been thinking what could come next. This is *too* much—I am already dead—have Boreall arrested; the chain of circumstantial evidence is very strong.’

‘Baker!’ said Vivian, turning to a servant, ‘Go and inquire if Mr. Stapylton Toad dines at the Castle to-day.’

A flourish of trumpets announced the rise of the Marchioness of Carabas, and in a few minutes the most ornamental portion of the guests had disappeared. The gentlemen made a general ‘move up,’ and Vivian found himself opposite his friend, Mr. Hargrave.

‘Ah! Mr. Hargrave, how d’ye do? What do you think of the Secretary’s state paper?’

‘A magnificent composition, and quite unanswerable. I was just speaking of it to my friend here, Mr. Metternich Scribe. Allow me to introduce you to—Mr. Metternich Scribe.’

‘Mr. Metternich Scribe—Mr. Vivian Grey!’ and here Mr. Hargrave introduced Vivian to an effeminate-looking, perfumed, young man, with a handsome, unmeaning face, and very white hands. In short, as dapper a little diplomatist as ever tattled about the Congress of Verona, smirked at Lady Almack’s supper after the Opera, or vowed ‘that Richmond Terrace was a most convenient situation for official men.’

‘We have had it with us many weeks, before the public received it,’ said the future under-secretary, with a look at once condescending, and conceited.

‘Have you?’ said Vivian: ‘well, it does your office credit. It’s a singular thing, that Canning, and Croker, are the only official men who can write grammar.’

The dismayed young gentleman of the Foreign Office was about to mince a repartee, when Vivian left his seat, for he had a great deal of business to transact. ‘Mr.

Leverton,' said he, accosting a flourishing grazier, 'I have received a letter from my friend, M. De Noé. He is desirous of purchasing some Leicestershires for his estate in Burgundy. Pray, may I take the liberty of introducing his agent to you?'

Mr. Leverton was delighted.

'I also wanted to see you about some other little business. Let me see what was it. Never mind, I'll take my wine here, if you can make room for me; I shall remember it, I daresay, soon. Oh! by the bye—ah! that was it. Stapylton Toad—Mr. Stapylton Toad; I want to know all about Mr. Stapylton Toad—I daresay you can tell me. A friend of mine intends to consult him on a little parliamentary business, and he wishes to know something about him before he calls.'

As I am a great lover of conciseness, I shall résumer,¹ for the benefit of the reader, the information of Mr. Leverton.

Stapylton Toad had not the honour of being acquainted with his father's name; but as the son found himself, at an early age, apprenticed to a solicitor of eminence, he was of opinion that his parent must have been respectable. *Respectable!* mysterious word! Stapylton was a very diligent and faithful clerk, but was not so fortunate in his apprenticeship as the celebrated Whittington, for his master had no daughter, and many sons; in consequence of which, Stapylton, not being able to become his master's partner, became his master's rival.

On the door of one of the shabbiest houses in Jermyn Street, the name of Mr. Stapylton Toad for a long time

¹ I have ventured on using this word, in spite of the plaintive remonstrances contained in a petty little article in the last number of the *Quarterly Review*. I deprecate equally with the Reviewer, 'the *hodge-podge* of languages,' now so much in vogue; and although I am not quite prepared to say that I consider this practice 'as nauseous as wearing perfumes,' I must exceedingly regret, that such an authority as the *Quarterly Review*, and so strenuous an advocate for 'keeping our pure well of English undefiled,' as this *Quarterly Reviewer*, should interlard his sentences with the tritest Latin quotations, with a classical enthusiasm worthy of a very young schoolboy, or a very ancient schoolmaster.

figured, magnificently engraved on a broad brass plate. There was nothing, however, otherwise, in the appearance of the establishment, which indicated that Mr. Toad's progress was very rapid, or his professional career extraordinarily prosperous. In an outward office one solitary clerk was seen, oftener stirring his office fire, than wasting his master's ink ; and Mr. Toad was known by his brother attorneys, as a gentleman who was not recorded in the courts as ever having conducted a single cause. In a few years, however, a story was added to the Jermyn Street abode, which new pointed, and new painted, began to assume a most mansion-like appearance. The house-door was also thrown open, for the solitary clerk no longer found time to answer the often agitated bell ; and the eyes of the entering client were now saluted by a gorgeous green baize office door ; the imposing appearance of which was only equalled by Mr. Toad's new private portal, splendid with a brass knocker, and patent varnish. And now his brother attorneys began to wonder 'how Toad got on ! and who Toad's clients were.'

A few more years rolled over, and Mr. Toad was seen riding in the Park at a most classical hour, attended by a groom in a most classical livery. And now 'the profession' wondered still more, and significant looks were interchanged by 'the respectable houses' ; and flourishing practitioners in the City shrugged up their shoulders, and talked mysteriously of 'money business,' and 'some odd work in annuities.' In spite, however, of the charitable surmises of his brother lawyers, it must be confessed, that nothing of even an *equivocal* nature ever transpired against the character of the flourishing Mr. Toad ; who, to complete the mortification of his less successful rivals, married, and at the same time moved from Jermyn Street to Cavendish Square. The new residence of Mr. Toad, had previously been the mansion of a noble client, and one whom, as the world said, Mr. Toad 'had got out of difficulties.' This significant phrase will probably throw some light upon the nature of the mysterious business of

our prosperous practitioner. Noble Lords who have been *in* difficulties, will not much wonder at the prosperity of those who get them *out*.

About this time Mr. Toad became acquainted with Lord Mounteney, a nobleman in great distress, with fifty thousand per annum. His Lordship 'really did not know how he had got *involved*: he never gamed, he was not married, and his consequent expenses had never been unreasonable; he was not extraordinarily negligent—quite the reverse, was something of a man of business, remembered once looking over his accounts; and yet, in spite of this regular and correct career, found himself quite *involved*, and must leave England.'

The arrangement of the *Mounteney property* was the coup finale of Mr. Stapylton Toad's professional celebrity. His Lordship was *not* under the necessity of quitting England: and found himself, in the course of five years, in the receipt of a clear rental of five-and-twenty thousand per annum. His Lordship was in raptures: and Stapylton Toad purchased an elegant villa in Surrey, and became a Member of Parliament. Goodburn Park, for such was the name of Mr. Toad's country residence, in spite of its double lodges, and patent park paling, was not, to Mr. Toad, a very expensive purchase; for he 'took it off the hands' of a distressed client, who wanted an immediate supply, 'merely to convenience him,' and, consequently, became the purchaser at about half its real value. 'Attorneys,' as Bustle the auctioneer says, 'have *such* opportunities!'

Mr. Toad's career in the House, was as correct as his conduct out of it. After ten years' regular attendance, the boldest conjecturer would not have dared to define his political principles. It was a rule with Stapylton Toad, *never to commit himself*. Once, indeed, he wrote an able pamphlet on the Corn Laws, which excited the dire indignation of that egregious body, the Political Economy Club. But Stapylton cared little for their subtle confutations, and their loudly expressed contempt.

He had obliged the country gentlemen of England, and ensured the return, at the next election, of Lord Mounteney's brother for the county. At this general election also, Stapylton Toad's purpose in entering the House became rather more manifest; for it was found, to the surprise of the whole country, that there was scarcely a place in England—county, town, or borough—in which Mr. Stapylton Toad did not possess some influence. In short, it was discovered, that Mr. Stapylton Toad had 'a first-rate parliamentary business'; that nothing could be done without his co-operation, and everything with it. In spite of his prosperity, Stapylton had the good sense never to retire from business, and even to refuse a baronetcy—on condition, however, that it should be offered to his son.

Stapylton, like the rest of mankind, had his weak points. The late Marquess of Almacks was wont to manage him very happily, and Toad was always introducing that minister's opinion of his importance. "My time is quite at your service, General," although the poor dear Marquess used to say, "Mr. Stapylton Toad, *your* time is *mine*." He knew the business I had to get through! The family portraits also, in most ostentatious frames, now adorned the dining-room of his London mansion; and it was amusing to hear the worthy M.P. dilate upon his likeness to his respected father.

'You see, my Lord,' Stapylton would say, pointing to a dark, dingy, picture of a gentleman in a rich court dress, 'you see, my Lord, it is not in a very good light, and it certainly is a very dark picture—by Hudson; all Hudson's pictures were dark. But if I were six inches taller, and could hold the light just there, I think your Lordship would be astonished at the resemblance; but it's a dark picture, certainly it is dark,—all Hudson's pictures were.'

CHAPTER XV

THE DRAWING-ROOM

THE Cavaliers have left the ancient hall, and the old pictures frown only upon empty tables. The Marquess immediately gained a seat by Mrs. Million, and was soon engrossed in deep converse with that illustrious lady. In one room, the most eminent and exclusive, headed by Mrs. Felix Lorraine, were now winding through the soothing mazes of a slow waltz, and now whirling, with all the rapidity of Eastern dervishes, to true double Wien time. In another saloon, the tedious tactics of quadrilles commanded the exertions of less civilised beings: here, Liberal Snake, the celebrated Political Economist, was lecturing to a knot of terrified country gentlemen; and there a celebrated Italian improvisatore poured forth to an ignorant and admiring audience, all the dulness of his inspiration. Vivian Grey was holding an earnest conversation in one of the recesses with Mr. Stapyhton Toad.—He had already charmed that worthy, by the deep interest which he took in everything relating to elections, and the House of Commons, and now they were hard at work on the Corn Laws. Although they agreed upon the main points, and Vivian's ideas upon this important subject had, of course, been adopted after studying with intense-ness Mr. Toad's 'most luminous and convincing pamphlet,' still there were a few minor points, on which Vivian 'was obliged to confess,' that 'he did not exactly see his way.' Mr. Toad was astonished, but argumentative, and of course, in due time, had made a convert of his companion; 'a young man,' as he afterwards remarked to Lord Mounteney, 'in whom he knew not which most to admire, the soundness of his own views, or the candour with which he treated those of others.' If you wish to win a man's heart, allow him to confute you.

‘I think, Mr. Grey, you must admit, that my definition of *labour* is the correct one?’ said Mr. Toad, looking earnestly in Vivian’s face, his finger just presuming to feel a button.

‘That exertion of mind or body, which is not the involuntary effect of the influence of natural sensations,’ slowly repeated Vivian, as if his whole soul was concentrated in each monosyllable—‘Y—e—s, Mr. Toad, I do admit it.’

‘Then, my dear Sir, the rest follows of course,’ triumphantly exclaimed the Member. ‘Don’t you see it?’

‘Although I admit the correctness of your definition, Mr. Toad, I am not free to confess, that I am ex—act—ly convinced of the soundness of your conclusion,’ said Vivian, in a very musing mood.

‘But, my dear Sir, I am surprised that you don’t see, that——’

‘Stop, Mr. Toad,’ eagerly exclaimed Vivian, ‘I see my error. I misconceived your meaning: you *are* right, Sir, your definition is correct.’

‘I was confident that I should convince you, Mr. Grey.’

‘This conversation, I assure you, Mr. Toad, has been to me a peculiarly satisfactory one. Indeed, Sir, I have long wished to have the honour of making your acquaintance. When but a boy, I remember at my father’s table, the late Marquess of Almack——’

‘Yes, Mr. Grey.’

‘One of the ablest men, Mr. Toad, after all, that this country ever produced.’

‘Oh, poor dear man!’

‘I remember him observing to a friend of mine, who was at that time desirous of getting into the House.—“Hargrave,” said his lordship, “if you want any information upon points of *practical politics*”—that was his phrase; you remember, Mr. Toad, that his lordship was peculiar in his phrases?’

‘Oh! yes, poor dear man; but you were observing, Mr. Grey——’

‘Ay, ay! “If you want any information,” said his lordship, “on such points, there is *only one* man in the kingdom whom you should consult, and he’s one of the soundest heads I know, and that’s Stapylton Toad, the member for Mounteney”; you know you were in for Mounteney then, Mr. Toad.’

‘I was, I was, and accepted the Chilterns to make room for Augustus Clay, Ernest Clay’s brother; who was so involved, that the only way to keep him out of the House of Correction, was to get him into the House of Commons. But the Marquess said so, eh?’

‘Ay, and much more, which I scarcely can remember; and then followed a long dissertation on the character of the noble statesman, and his views as to the agricultural interest, and the importance of the agricultural interest; and then a delicate hint was thrown out, as to ‘how delightful it would be to write a pamphlet together,’ on this mighty agricultural interest; and then came an éloge on the character of country gentlemen, and English yeomen, and the importance of keeping up the old English spirit in the peasantry, etc., etc., etc., etc.; and then, when Vivian had led Mr. Toad to deliver a most splendid and patriotic oration on this point, he ‘just remembered (quite apropos to the sentiments which Mr. Toad had just delivered, and which he did not hesitate to say, “did equal honour to his head and heart”) that there was a little point, which, if it was not trespassing too much on Mr. Toad’s attention, he would just submit to him’; and then he mentioned poor John Conyers’ case, although ‘he felt convinced from Mr. Toad’s well-known benevolent character, that it was quite unnecessary for him to do so, as he felt assured that it would be remedied immediately it fell under his cognizance; but then Mr. Toad had really so much business to transact, that perhaps these slight matters might occasionally not be submitted to him,’ etc., etc., etc.,

What could Stapylton Toad do but, after a little amiable grumbling about 'bad system, and bad precedent,' promise everything that Vivian Grey required?

'Mr. Vivian Grey,' said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, 'I cannot understand why you've been talking to Mr. Toad so long; will you waltz?'

Before Vivian could answer, a tittering, so audible, that considering the rank of the parties, it might almost be termed a loud shout, burst forth from the whole room. Cynthia Courtown had stolen behind Lord Alhambra, as he was sitting on an ottoman, à la Turque, and had folded a Cachemere shawl round his head, with a most Oriental tie. His Lordship, who, notwithstanding his eccentricities, was really a most amiable man, bore his blushing honours with a gracious dignity, worthy of a descendant of the Abencerrages. The sensation which this incident occasioned, favoured Vivian's escape from Mrs. Felix, for he had not left Mr. Stapylton Toad with any intention of waltzing.

But he had hardly escaped from the waltzers, ere he found himself in danger of being involved in a much more laborious duty; for now he stumbled on the Political Economist, and he was earnestly requested by the contending theorists, to assume the office of moderator. Emboldened by his success, Liberal Snake had had the hardihood to attack a personage of whose character he was not utterly ignorant, but on whom he was extremely desirous of 'making an impression.' This important person was Sir Christopher Mowbray, who, upon the lecturer presuming to inform him 'what *rent* was,' 'damned himself if he didn't know what rent was, a damned deal better than any damnationed French smuggler.' I don't wish to be coarse, but Sir Christopher is a great man, and the sayings of great men, particularly when they are representative of the sentiment of a species, should not pass unrecorded.

Sir Christopher Mowbray is member for the County of —; and member for the county he intends to be

next election, although he is in his seventy-ninth year, for he can still follow a fox, with as plucky a heart, and with as stout a voice, as any squire in Christendom. Sir Christopher, it must be confessed, is rather peculiar in his ideas. His grandson, Peregrine Mowbray, who is as pert a genius as the applause of a common-room ever yet spoiled, and as sublime an orator as the cheerings of the Union ever yet inspired, says 'the Baronet is not up to the nineteenth century'; and perhaps this very significant phrase will give the reader a more significant idea of Sir Christopher Mowbray, than a character as long, and as laboured, as the most perfect of my Lord Clarendon's. The truth is, the good Baronet had no idea of 'liberal principles,' or anything else of that school. His most peculiar characteristic, is a singular habit which he has got of styling political economists, *French smugglers*. Nobody has ever yet succeeded in extracting a reason from him for this singular appellation, and even if you angle with the most exquisite skill for the desired definition, Sir Christopher immediately salutes you with a volley of oaths, and damns French Wines, Bible Societies, and Mr. Huskisson. Sir Christopher for half a century has supported in the senate, with equal sedulousness and silence, the constitution, and the corn laws; he is perfectly aware of 'the present perilous state of the country,' and watches with great interest all 'the plans, and plots' of this enlightened age. The only thing which he does not exactly comprehend, is the London University. This affair really puzzles the worthy gentleman, who could as easily fancy a county member not being a freeholder, as an University not being at Oxford or Cambridge. Indeed, to this hour the old gentleman believes that the whole business is 'a damnationed hoax'; and if you tell him, that, far from the plan partaking of the visionary nature he conceives, there are actually four acres of very valuable land purchased near White Conduit House for the erection; and that there is little apprehension, that in the course of a century, the wooden poles which are now

stuck about the ground, will not be as fair, and flourishing, as the most leafy bowers of New College gardens ; the old gentleman looks up to heaven, as if determined not to be taken in, and leaning back in his chair, sends forth a sceptical and smiling 'No ! no ! no ! that won't do.'

Vivian extricated himself with as much grace as possible from the toils of the Economist, and indeed, like a skilful general, turned this little rencontre to account, in accomplishing the very end, for the attainment of which he had declined waltzing with Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

'My Lord,' said Vivian, addressing the Marquess, who was still by the side of Mrs. Million, 'I am going to commit a most ungallant act ; but you great men must pay a tax for your dignity. I am going to disturb you. You are wanted by half the county ! What could possibly induce you ever to allow a Political Economist to enter Château Désir ? There are, at least, three Baronets and four Squires in despair, writhing under the tortures of Liberal Snake. They have deputed me to request your assistance, to save them from being defeated in the presence of half their tenantry ; and I think, my Lord,' said Vivian, with a serious voice, 'if you could possibly contrive to interfere, it would be desirable. That lecturing knave never knows when to stop, and he is actually insulting men before whom, after all, he ought not dare to open his lips. I see that your Lordship is naturally not very much inclined to quit your present occupation, in order to act Moderator to a set of political brawlers ; but come, you shall not be quite sacrificed to the county,—I will give up the waltz in which I was engaged and keep your seat until your return.'

The Marquess, who was always 'keeping up county influence,' was very shocked at the obstreperous conduct of Liberal Snake. Indeed he had viewed the arrival of this worthy with no smiling countenance, but what could he say—as he came in the suit of Lord Pert, who was writing, with the lecturer's assistance, a pretty little pamphlet on the Currency ? Apologising to Mrs.

Million, and promising to return as soon as possible, and lead her to the music room, the Marquess retired, with the determination of annihilating one of the stoutest members of the Political Economy club.

Vivian began by apologising to Mrs. Million, for disturbing her progress to the hall, by his sudden arrival before dinner ; and then for a quarter of an hour poured forth the usual quantity of piquant anecdotes, and insidious compliments. Mrs. Million found Vivian's conversation no disagreeable relief to the pompous prosiness of the late attaché ; and, although no brilliant star dangled at his breast, she could not refrain from feeling extremely pleased.

And now—having succeeded in commanding Mrs. Million's attention by that general art of pleasing, which was for all the world, and which was, of course, formed upon his general experience of human nature,—Vivian began to make his advances to Mrs. Million's feelings, by a particular art of pleasing ; that is, an art which was for the particular person alone, whom he was at any time addressing, and which was founded on his particular knowledge of that person's character.

'How beautiful the old hall looked to-day ! It is a scene which can only be met with in ancient families.'

'Ah ! there is nothing like old families !' remarked Mrs. Million, with all the awkward feelings of a *nouveau riche*.

'Do you think so ?' said Vivian ; 'I once thought so myself, but I confess that my opinion is greatly changed.—After all, what is noble blood ? My eye is now resting on a crowd of honourables ; and yet, being among them, do we treat them in a manner differing in any way from that which we should employ to individuals of a lower caste, who were equally uninteresting ?'

'Certainly not,' said Mrs. Million.

'The height of the ambition of the less exalted ranks is to be *noble*, because they conceive to be noble, implies to be superior ; associating in their minds, as they always

do, a pre-eminence over their equals.—But, to be noble, among nobles, where is the pre-eminence ?’

‘Where indeed ?’ said Mrs. Million ; and she thought of herself, sitting the most considered personage in this grand castle, and yet with sufficiently base blood flowing in her veins.

‘And thus, in the highest circles,’ continued Vivian, ‘a man is of course not valued because he is a Marquess, or a Duke ; but because he is a great warrior, or a great statesman, or very fashionable, or very witty. In all classes but the highest, a peer, however unfriended by nature or by fortune, becomes a man of a certain rate of consequence ; but to be a person of consequence in the highest class, requires something else, except high blood.’

‘I quite agree with you in your sentiments, Mr. Grey. Now what character, or what situation in life, would you choose, if you had the power of making your choice ?’

‘That is really a most metaphysical question. As is the custom of all young men, I have sometimes, in my reveries, imagined what I conceived to be a lot of pure happiness ; and yet Mrs. Million will perhaps be astonished that I was neither to be nobly born, nor to acquire nobility ; that I was not to be a literary man, nor a warrior, nor a merchant, nor indeed any profession—not even a professional dandy.’

‘Oh ! love in a cottage, I suppose’ ; interrupted Mrs. Million.

‘Neither love in a cottage, nor science in a cell.’

‘Oh ! pray tell me what it is.’

‘What it is ? Oh ! Lord Mayor of London, I suppose ; that is the only situation which answers to my oracular description.’

‘Oh ! then you have been joking all this time !’

‘Oh ! no ; not at all. Come then, let us imagine this perfect lot. In the first place, I would be born in the middling classes of society, or even lower, because I

would wish my character to be impartially developed. I would be born to no hereditary prejudices, nor hereditary passions. My course in life should not be carved out by the example of a grandfather, nor my ideas modelled to a preconceived system of family perfection. Do you like my first principle, Mrs. Million ?'

'I must hear everything before I give an opinion.'

'When, therefore, my mind was formed, I would wish to become the proprietor of a princely fortune.'

'Yes !' eagerly exclaimed Mrs. Million.

'And now would come the moral singularity of my fate. If I had gained this fortune by commerce, or in any other similar mode, my disposition, before the creation of this fortune, would naturally have been formed, and been permanently developed ; and my mind would have been similarly affected, had I succeeded to some ducal father ; for I should then, in all probability, have inherited some family line of conduct, both moral and political ; but under the circumstances I have imagined, the result would be far different. I should then be in the singular situation of possessing, at the same time, unbounded wealth, and the whole powers and natural feelings of my mind, unoppressed and unshackled. Oh ! how splendid would be my career ! I would not allow the change in my condition to exercise any influence on my natural disposition. I would experience the same passions, and be subject to the same feelings, only they should be exercised, and influential in a wider sphere. Then would be seen the influence of great wealth, directed by a disposition similar to that of the generality of men, inasmuch as it had been formed like that of the generality of men ; and consequently, one much better acquainted with their feelings, their habits, and their wishes. Such a lot would indeed be princely ! Such a lot would infallibly ensure the affection, and respect, of the great majority of mankind ; and, supported by them, what should I care, if I were misunderstood by a few fools, and abused by a few knaves ?'

Here came the Marquess to lead the lady to the concert. As she quitted her seat, a smile, beaming with graciousness, rewarded her youthful companion. 'Ah!' thought Mrs. Million; 'I go to the concert, but leave sweeter music than can possibly meet me there. What is the magic of these words? It is not flattery; such is not the language of Miss Gusset! It is not a refacimento of compliments: such is not the style with which I am saluted by the Duke of Doze, and the Earl of Leatherdale! Apparently I have heard a young philosopher delivering his sentiments upon an abstract point in human life; and yet have I not listened to the most brilliant apology for my own character, and the most triumphant defence of my own conduct. Of course it was unintentional, and yet how agreeable to be unintentionally defended!' So mused Mrs. Million, and she made a thousand vows, not to let a day pass over, without obtaining a pledge from Vivian Grey, to visit her on their return to the metropolis.

Vivian remained in his seat for some time after the departure of his companion. 'On my honour, I have half a mind to desert my embryo faction, and number myself in her gorgeous retinue. Let me see—what part should I act? her secretary, or her toad-eater—or her physician, or her cook? or shall I be her page? Methinks I should make a pretty page, and hand a chased goblet as gracefully as any monkey that ever bent his knee in a Lady's chamber. Well! at any rate, there is this chance to be kept back, as the gambler does his last trump, or the cunning fencer his last ruse.'

He rose to offer his arm to some stray fair one; for crowds were now hurrying to pine-apples and lobster salads: that is to say, supper was ready in the LONG GALLERY.

In a moment Vivian's arm was locked in that of Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

'Oh, Mr. Grey, I have got a much better ghost story than even that of the Leyden Professor for you;

but I am so wearied with waltzing, that I must tell it you to-morrow. How came you to be so late this morning? Have you been paying many calls to-day? I quite missed you at dinner. Do you think Ernest Clay handsome? I dare not repeat what Lady Scrope said of you! You're an admirer of Lady Julia Knighton, I believe?—I do not much like this plan of supping in the Long Gallery—it is a favourite locale of mine, and I have no idea of my private promenade being invaded by the uninteresting presence of trifles and Italian creams. Have you been telling Mrs. Million that she was very witty?' asked Vivian's companion, with a very significant look.

CHAPTER XVI

TOADEYS

SWEET reader! you know what a Toadey is? That agreeable animal which you meet every day in civilised society. But perhaps you have not speculated very curiously upon this interesting race. Tant pis! for you cannot live many lustres, without finding it of some service to be a little acquainted with their habits.

The world in general is under a mistake as to the nature of these vermin. They are by no means characterised by that similarity of disposition, for which your common observer gives them credit. There are Toadeys of all possible natures.

There is your Common-place Toady, who merely echoes its feeder's common-place observations. There is your Playing-up Toadey, who, unconscious of its feeder, is always playing-up to its feeder's weaknesses—and, as the taste of that feeder varies, accordingly provides its cates and comfitures. A little bit of scandal for a dashing widow, or a pious little hymn for a sainted one ;

the secret history of a newly discovered gas for a May Fair feeder, and an interesting anecdote about a Newgate bobcap, or a Penitentiary apron, for a charitable one. Then there is your Drawing-out Toadey, who omits no opportunity of giving you a chance of being victorious, in an argument where there is no contest, and a dispute where there is no difference ; and then there is—— but I detest essay writing, so I introduce you at once to a party of these vermin. If you wish to enjoy a curious sight, you must watch the Toadeys, when they are unembarrassed by the almost perpetual presence of their breeders—when they are animated by ‘the spirit of freedom’—when, like Curran’s Negro, the chain bursts by the impulse of their swelling veins. The great singularity is the struggle between their natural and their acquired feelings : the eager opportunity which they seize of revenging their voluntary bondage, by their secret taunts on their adopted task-masters ; and the servility, which they habitually mix up, even with their scandal. Like veritable Grimalkins, they fawn upon their victims previous to the festival—compliment them upon the length of their whiskers, and the delicacy of their limbs, prior to excoriating them, and dwelling on the flavour of their crushed bones. Oh ! ’tis a beautiful scene, and ten thousand times more piquant than the humours of a Servants’ Hall, or the most grotesque and glorious moments of high life below stairs.

‘Dear Miss Graves,’ said Miss Gusset, ‘you can’t imagine how terrified I was at that horrible green parrot flying upon my head ! I declare it pulled out three locks of hair.’

‘Horrible green parrot, my dear madam ! why it was sent to my Lady by Prince Xtmnprqtsoklw, and never shall I forget the agitation we were in about that parrot. I thought it would never have got to the Château, for the Prince could only send his carriage with it as far as Toadcaster ; luckily my Lady’s youngest brother, who was staying at Désir, happened to get drowned at the

time,—and so Davenport, very clever of him ! sent her on in my Lord Dormer's hearse.'

'In the hearse ! Good heavens, Miss Graves ! How could you think of green parrots at such an awful moment ! I should have been in fits for three days. Eh ! Dr. Sly ?'

'Certainly you would, Madam—your nerves are very delicate.'

'Well ! I, for my part, never could see much use in giving up to one's feelings. It is all very well for commoners,' rather rudely exclaimed the Marchioness 'Toadey—'but we did not choose to expose ourselves to the servants, when the old General died this year. Everything went on as usual. Her Ladyship attended Almacks ; my Lord took his seat in the House ; and I looked in at Lady Doubtful's ; where we do not visit, but where the Marchioness wishes to be civil.'

'Oh ! we do not visit Lady Doubtful either,' replied Miss Gusset : 'she had not a card for our fête champêtre. Oh ! I was so sorry you were not in town. It was so delightful !'

'Oh ! do tell me who was there. I quite long to know all about it. I saw an account of it in the papers. Everything seemed to go off so well. Do tell me who was there ?'

'Oh ! there was plenty of Royalty at the head of the list. Really I cannot go into particulars, but everybody was there—who is anybody—eh ! Dr. Sly ?'

'Certainly, Madam. The pines were most admirable ; there are few people for whom I entertain a higher esteem than Mr. Gunter.'

'The Marchioness seems very fond of her dog and parrot, Miss Graves—but she is a sweet woman !'

'Oh, a dear, amiable creature ! but I cannot think how she can bear the eternal screaming of that noisy bird.'

'Nor I, indeed. Well, thank goodness, Mrs. Million has no pets—eh ! Dr. Sly ?'

‘Certainly—I am clearly of opinion that it cannot be wholesome to have so many animals about a house. Besides which, I have noticed that the Marchioness always selects the nicest morsels for that little poodle; and I am also clearly of opinion, Miss Graves, that the fit it had the other day arose from repletion.’

‘Oh! I have no doubt of it in the world. She consumes three pounds of arrowroot weekly, and two pounds of the finest loaf sugar, which I have the trouble of grating every Monday morning.—Mrs. Million appears to be a most amiable woman, Miss Gusset?’

‘Oh! quite perfection—so charitable, so intellectual, such a soul! it is a pity though her manner is so abrupt, she really does not appear to advantage sometimes—eh! Dr. Sly?’

The Toadey’s Toadey bowed assent as usual. ‘Well,’ rejoined Miss Graves, ‘that is rather a fault of the dear Marchioness,—a little want of consideration for another’s feelings, but she means nothing.’

‘Oh, no! nor Mrs. Million, dear creature! *she* means nothing; though, I daresay, not knowing her so well as we do—eh! Dr. Sly?—you were a little surprised at the way in which she spoke to me at dinner.’

‘All people have their oddities, Miss Gusset. I am sure the Marchioness is not aware how she tries my patience about that little wretch Julie;—I had to rub her with warm flannels for an hour and a half, before the fire this morning;—that is that Vivian Grey’s doing.’

‘Who is this Mr. Grey, Miss Graves?’

‘Who, indeed!—Some young man the Marquess has picked up, and who comes lecturing here about poodles, and parrots, and thinking himself quite Lord Paramount, I can assure you; I am surprised that the Marchioness, who is a most sensible woman, can patronise such conduct a moment; but whenever she begins to see through him, the young gentleman has always got a story about a bracelet, or a bandeau, and quite turns her head.’

‘Very disagreeable, I am sure—eh! Dr. Sly?’

'Some people are so easily managed! By the bye, Miss Gusset, who could have advised Mrs. Million to wear crimson? So large as she is, it does not at all suit her: I suppose it's a *favourite* colour.'

'Dear Miss Graves, you are always so insinuating. What can Miss Graves mean—eh! Dr. Sly?'

A Lord Burleigh shake of the head.

'Cynthia Courtown seems as lively as ever,' said Miss Gusset.

'Yes, lively enough, but I wish her manner was less *brusque*.'

'*Brusque*, indeed! you may well say so: she nearly pushed me down in the hall; and when I looked as if I thought she might have given me a little more room, she tossed her head and said 'Beg pardon, never saw you!'

'I wonder what Lord Alhambra sees in that girl?'

'Oh! those forward Misses always take the men—eh! Dr. Sly?'

'Well,' said Miss Graves, 'I have no notion that it will come to anything—I am sure, I, for one, hope not,' added she with all a Toadey's venom.

'The Marquess seems to keep a remarkably good table,' said the Physician. 'There was a haunch to-day, which I really think was the finest haunch I ever met with: but that little move at dinner,—it was, to say the least, very ill-timed.'

'Yes, that was Vivian Grey again,' said Miss Graves, very indignantly.

'So, you have got the Beaconsfields here, Miss Graves:—nice, unaffected, quiet, people?'

'Yes! very quiet.'

'As you say, Miss Graves, *very* quiet, but a little heavy.'

'Yes, heavy enough.'

'If you had but seen the quantity of pine-apples that boy Dormer Stanhope devoured at our *fête champêtre*!—but I have the comfort of knowing that they made him very ill—eh! Dr. Sly?'

‘Oh! he learnt that from his uncle,’ said Miss Graves—‘it is quite disgusting to see how that Vivian Grey encourages him.’

‘What an elegant, accomplished, woman Mrs. Felix Lorraine seems to be, Miss Graves!—I suppose the Marchioness is very fond of her?’

‘Oh, yes,—the Marchioness is so good-natured, that I daresay she thinks very well of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. She thinks well of every one—but I believe Mrs. Felix is rather a greater favourite with the *Marquess*.’

‘O——h!’ drawled out Miss Gusset with a very significant tone. ‘I suppose she is one of your playing-up ladies. I think you told me she was only on a visit here.’

‘A pretty long visit though, for a sister-in-law—if sister-in-law she be. As I was saying to the Marchioness the other day—when Mrs. Felix offended her so violently by trampling on the dear little Julie—if it came into a Court of Justice, I should like to see the proof—that’s all. At any rate, it is pretty evident that Mr. Lorraine has had enough of his bargain.’

‘Quite evident, I think—eh! Dr. Sly?—Those German women never make good English wives,’ continued Miss Gusset, with all a Toadey’s patriotism.

‘Talking of wives, did not you think Lady Julia spoke very strangely of Sir Peter, after dinner to-day? I hate that Lady Julia, if it be only for petting Vivian Grey so. She positively called him “little love”—very flighty, and sickening.’

‘Yes, indeed—it is quite enough to make one sick—eh! Dr. Sly?’

The Doctor shook his head mournfully, remembering the haunch.

‘They say Ernest Clay is in sad difficulties, Miss Gusset.’

‘Well, I always expected his dash would end in that. Those wild harum-scarum men are monstrous disagreeable—I like a person of some reflection—eh! Dr. Sly?’

Before the doctor could bow his usual assent, there entered a pretty little page, very daintily attired in a fancy dress of green and silver. Twirling his richly chased dirk with one tiny white hand, and at the same time playing with a pet curl, which was most picturesquely flowing over his forehead, he advanced with ambling gait to Miss Gusset, and, in a mincing voice and courtly phrase, summoned her to the imperial presence.

The lady's features immediately assumed the expression which befitted the approaching interview, and in a moment Miss Graves and the physician were left alone.

'Very amiable young woman, Miss Gusset appears to be, Dr. Sly ?'

'Oh ! the most amiable being in the world—I owe her the greatest obligations.'

'So gentle in her manners.'

'Oh yes, *so* gentle.'

'So considerate for everybody.'

'Oh, yes ! *so* considerate,' echoed the Aberdeen M.D.

'I am afraid though, she must sometimes meet with people who do not exactly understand her character ; such extraordinary consideration for others is sometimes liable to misconstruction.'

'Very sensibly remarked, Miss Graves. I am sure Miss Gusset means well ; and that kind of thing is all very admirable in its way—but—but——'

'But what, Dr. Sly ?'

'Why, I was merely going to hazard an observation, that according to my feelings—that is, to my own peculiar view of the case,—I should prefer some people thinking more about their own business, and, and—but I mean nothing.'

'Oh, no, of course not, Dr. Sly ; you know we always except our own immediate friends—at least, when we can be sure they *are* our friends ; but as you were saying, or going to say, those persons who are so very anxious about other people's affairs, are not always the

most agreeable persons in the world to live with. It certainly did strike me, that that interference of Miss Gusset's about Julie to-day, was, to say the least, very odd.'

'Oh, my dear madam ! when you know her as well as I do, you will see she is always ready to put in a word.'

'Well ! do you know, Dr. Sly, between ourselves, that was exactly my impression ; and she is then very, very—I do not exactly mean to say meddling, or inquisitive ; but—but you understand me, Dr. Sly ?'

'Perfectly ; and if I were to speak my mind, which I do not hesitate to do in confidence to you, Miss Graves—I really should say, that she is the most jealous, irritable, malicious, meddling, and at the same time *fawning*, disposition, that I ever met with in the whole course of my life—and I speak from experience.'

'Well, do you know, Dr. Sly, from all I have seen, that was exactly my impression ; therefore I have been particularly careful not to commit myself to such a person.'

'Ah ! Miss Graves ! if all ladies were like you !—O——h !'

'My *dear* Dr. Sly !'

CHAPTER XVII

THE CABINET DINNER

VIVIAN had duly acquainted the Marquess with the successful progress of his negotiations with their intended partizans, and his Lordship himself had conversed with them singly on the important subject. It was thought proper, however, in this stage of the proceedings, that the parties interested should meet together ; and so the two Lords, and Sir Berdmores, and Vivian, were invited to dine with the Marquess alone, and in his library.

There was abundance of dumb waiters, and other inventions, by which the ease of the guests might be consulted, without risking even their secret looks to the gaze of liveried menials. The Marquess's gentleman sat in an antechamber, in case human aid might be necessary, and everything, as his Lordship averred, was 'on the same system as the Cabinet Dinners.'

In the ancient kingdom of England, it hath ever been the custom to dine previously to transacting business. This habit is one of those few which are not contingent upon the mutable fancies of fashion, and at this day we see Cabinet Dinners, and Vestry Dinners, alike proving the correctness of my assertion. Whether the custom really expedites the completion, or the general progress of the business which gives rise to it, is a grave question, which I do not feel qualified to decide. Certain it is, that very often, after the *dinner*, an appointment is made for the transaction of the *business* on the following morning: at the same time it must be remembered, that had it not been for the opportunity which the banquet afforded of developing the convivial qualities of the guests, and drawing out, by the assistance of generous wine, their most kindly sentiments, and most engaging feelings, it is very probable that the appointment for the transaction of the business would never have been made at all.

There certainly was every appearance that 'the great business,' as the Marquess styled it, would not be very much advanced by the cabinet dinner at Château D'ésir. For, in the first place, the table was laden 'with every delicacy of the season,' and really when a man is either going to talk sense, fight a duel, or make his will, nothing should be seen at dinner, save rump steaks, and the lightest Bordeaux. And, in the second place, it must be candidly confessed, that when it came to the point of all the parties interested meeting, the Marquess's courage somewhat misgave him. Not that any particular reason occurred to him, which would have induced him to yield one jot of the *theory* of his sentiments, but the putting

them in practice rather made him nervous. In short, he was as convinced as ever, that he was an ill-used man of first-rate talent ; but then he remembered his agreeable sinecure, and his dignified office, and he might *not* succeed.—‘The thought did not please.’

But here they were all assembled ; receding was impossible ; and so the Marquess dashed off a tumbler of Burgundy, and felt more courageous. His Lordship’s conduct did not escape the hawk eye of one of his guests ; and Vivian Grey was rather annoyed at seeing the Marquess’s glass so frequently refilled. In fact the Marquess was drinking deep, and deep drinking was neither my Lord Carabas’ weak, nor strong point, for he was neither habitually a toper, nor one who bore wine’s sweet influence like a docile subject.

The venison was so prime, that not one word relative to the subject of their meeting was broached during the whole dinner ; and Lord Beaconsfield, more than once, thought to himself, that had he ever been aware that business was so agreeable, he too would have been a statesman. But the haunch at last vanished, and the speech from the throne commenced.

‘My Lords and Gentlemen,’ began the Marquess, ‘although I have myself taken the opportunity of communicating to you singly my thoughts upon a certain subject, and although, if I am rightly informed, my excellent young friend has communicated to you more fully upon that subject ; yet, my Lords and Gentlemen, I beg to remark, that this is the first time, that we have collectively assembled to consult on the possibility of certain views, upon the propriety of their nature, and the expediency of their adoption.’ Here the bottle passed, and the Marquess took a bumper. ‘My Lords and Gentlemen, when I take into consideration the nature of the various interests, of which the body politic of this great empire is regulated ; (Lord Courtown, the bottle stops with you) when I observe, I repeat, this, I naturally ask myself what right, what claims, what, what, what,—

I repeat, what right, these governing interests have to the influence which they possess? (Vivian, my boy, you'll find Champagne on the waiter behind you.) Yes, gentlemen, it is in this temper (the corkscrew's by Sir Berdmore), it is, I repeat, in this temper, and actuated by these views, that we meet together this day. Gentlemen, to make the matter short, it is clear to me that we have all been under a mistake; that my Lord Courtown, and my Lord Beaconsfield, and Sir Berdmore Scrope, and my humble self, are not doing our duty to our country, in not taking the management of its affairs into our own hands! Mr. Vivian Grey, a gentleman with whom you are all acquainted,—Mr. Vivian Grey is younger than myself, or you, my Lord Courtown, or you, my Lord Beaconsfield, or even you, I believe, Sir Berdmore. Mr. Vivian Grey has consequently better lungs than any of us, and he will—I make no doubt, do, what I would, if I were of his age—explain the whole business to us all; and now my Lords, and Gentlemen, let us have a glass of Champagne.'

A great deal of 'desultory conversation,' as the reporters style it, relative to the great topic of debate, now occurred; and, as the subject was somewhat dry, the Carabas Champagne suffered considerably. When the brains of the party were tolerably elevated, Vivian addressed them. The tenor of his oration may be imagined. He developed the new political principles, demonstrated the mistake under the baneful influence of which they had so long suffered, promised them place, and power, and patronage, and personal consideration, if they would only act on the principles which he recommended, in the most flowing language, and the most melodious voice, in which the glories of ambition were ever yet chaunted. There was a buzz of admiration when the flattering music ceased; the Marquess smiled triumphantly, as if to say, 'Didn't I tell you he was a monstrous clever fellow?' and the whole business seemed settled. Lord Courtown gave in a bumper, '*Mr. Vivian Grey, and success to his maiden*

speech' ; and Vivian dashed off a tumbler of Champagne to '*the New Union*,' and certainly the whole party were in extreme good spirits. At last, Sir Berdmore, the coolest of them all, raised his voice : 'He quite agreed with Mr. Grey in the principles which he had developed ; and, for his own part, he was free to confess, that he had the most perfect confidence in that gentleman's very brilliant abilities, and augured from their exertion the most complete and triumphant success. At the same time, he felt it his duty to remark to their Lordships, and also to that gentleman, that the House of Commons was a new scene to him ; and he put it, whether they were quite convinced that they were sufficiently strong, as regarded talent in that assembly. He could not take it upon himself to offer to become the leader of the party. Mr. Grey *might* be capable of undertaking that charge, but still, it must be remembered, that, in that assembly, he was, as yet, *untried*. He made no apology to Mr. Grey for speaking his mind so freely ; he was sure that his motives could not be misinterpreted. If their Lordships, on the whole, were of opinion that this charge should be entrusted to him, he, Sir Berdmore, having the greatest confidence in Mr. Grey's abilities, would certainly support him to the utmost.'

'He can do anything,' shouted the Marquess ; who was now quite tipsy.

'He's a surprising clever man !' said Lord Courtown.

'He's a surprising clever man !' echoed Lord Beaconsfield.

'Stop, my Lords,' burst forth Vivian, 'your good opinion deserves my gratitude, but these important matters do *indeed* require a moment's consideration. I trust that Sir Berdmore Scrope does not imagine that I am the vain idiot, to be offended at his most excellent remarks, even for a moment. Are we not met here for the common good—and to consult for the success of the common cause ? Whatever my talents are, they are at your service—and, in your service, will I venture any-

thing ; but surely, my Lords, you will not unnecessarily entrust this great business to a raw hand ! I need only aver, that I am ready to follow any leader, who can play his great part in a becoming manner.'

'Noble !' halloed the Marquess ; who was now quite drunk.

But who was the leader to be ? Sir Berdmore frankly confessed that he had none to propose ; and the Viscount and the Baron were quite silent.

'Gentlemen !' bawled the Marquess, and his eye danced in his beaming face, 'Gentlemen ! there *is* a man, who could do our bidding.' The eyes of every guest were fixed on the haranguing host.

'Gentlemen, fill your glasses—I give you our leader—Mr. Frederick Cleveland !'

'Cleveland !' was the universal shout. A glass of claret fell from Lord Courtown's hand ; Lord Beaconsfield stopped as he was about to fill his glass, and stood gaping at the Marquess, with the decanter in his hand ; and Sir Berdmore stared on the table, as men do when something unexpected, and astounding, has occurred at dinner, which seems past all their management.

'Cleveland !' shouted the guests.

'I should as soon have expected you to have given us Lucifer !' said Lord Courtown.

'Or the present Secretary !' said Lord Beaconsfield.

'Or yourself,' said Sir Berdmore Scrope.

'And does any one mean to insinuate that Frederick Cleveland is not capable of driving out every minister, that has ever existed since the days of the deluge ?' demanded the Marquess, with a fierce air.

'We do not deny Mr. Cleveland's powers, my Lord ; we only humbly beg to suggest that it appears to us, that, of all the persons in the world, the man with whom Mr. Cleveland would be least inclined to coalesce, would be the Marquess of Carabas.'

In spite of the Champagne, the Marquess looked blank.

‘Gentlemen,’ said Vivian, ‘do not despair ; it is enough for me to know that there *is* a man who is capable of doing our work. Be he animate man, or incarnate fiend, provided he can be found within this realm, I pledge myself that, within ten days, he is drinking my noble friend’s health at this very board.’

The Marquess halloed, ‘Bravo!’—the rest laughed, and rose in confusion ; Lord Beaconsfield fell over a chair, and, extricating himself with admirable agility, got entangled with a dumb-waiter, which came tumbling down with a fearful crash of plates, bottles, knives, and decanters. The pledge was, however, accepted ; and the Marquess and Vivian were left alone. The worthy Peer, though terrifically tipsy, seemed quite overcome by Vivian’s offer and engagement.

‘Vivian, my boy ! you don’t know what you’ve done—you don’t, indeed—take care of yourself, my boy,—you’re going to call on the Devil ; you are, indeed—you’re going to leave your card at the Devil’s. Didn’t you hear what Lord Beaconsfield,—a very worthy gentleman, but, between ourselves, a damned fool—that’s *entre nous*, though, *entre nous*—I say, didn’t you hear Lord Beaconsfield—no, was it Lord Beaconsfield ? No, no, your memory, Vivian, is very bad ; it was Lord Courtown : didn’t you hear him say that Frederick Cleveland was Lucifer.—He *is* Lucifer ; he is, upon my honour—how shocking ! What times we live in ! To think of you, Vivian Grey ; you, a respectable young man, with a worthy and respectable father ; to think of you leaving your card at — the Devil’s !—Oh ! shocking ! shocking ! But never mind, my dear fellow ! never mind, don’t lose heart.—I’ll tell you what to do—*talk* to him, and by Jove, if he doesn’t make me an apology, I’m not a Cabinet Minister. Good-night, my dear fellow ; he’s sure to make an apology ; don’t be frightened ; remember what I say, *talk* to him,—*talk—talk.*’—So saying, the worthy Marquess reeled and retired.

‘What have I done ?’ thought Vivian ; ‘I am sure

that Lucifer *may* know, for I do not. This Cleveland is, I suppose, after all but a *man*. I saw the feeble fools were wavering ; and to save all, made a leap in the dark. Well ! is my skull cracked ? Nous verrons. How hot, either this room or my blood is ! Come, for some fresh air (he opened the library window) ; how fresh and soft it is ! Just the night for the balcony. Hah ! music ! I cannot mistake that voice. Singular woman ! I'll just walk on, till I am beneath her window.'

Vivian accordingly proceeded along the balcony, which extended down one whole side of the Château. While he was looking at the moon he stumbled against some one. It was Colonel Delmington. He apologised to the militaire for treading on his toes, and wondered 'how the devil he got there !'

BOOK THE THIRD

CHAPTER I

A COLLEAGUE

FREDERICK CLEVELAND was educated at Eton, and at Cambridge ; and after having proved, both at the school and the University, that he possessed talents of the first order, he had the courage, in order to perfect them, to immure himself for three years in a German University. It was impossible, therefore, for two minds to have been cultivated on more contrary systems, than those of Frederick Cleveland and Vivian Grey. The systems on which they had been educated were not, however, more discordant than the respective tempers of the pupils. With that of Vivian Grey the reader is now somewhat acquainted. It has been shown that he was one, precociously convinced of the necessity of managing mankind, by studying their tempers and humouring their weaknesses. Cleveland turned from the Book of Nature with contempt ; and although his was a mind of extraordinary acuteness, he was, at three-and-thirty, as ignorant of the workings of the human heart, as when, in the innocence of boyhood, he first reached Eton. The inaptitude of his nature to consult the feelings, or adopt the sentiments of others, was visible in his slightest actions. He was the only man who ever passed three years in Germany, and in a German University, who had never yielded to the magic influence of a Meerschaum ; and the same inflexibility of character which prevented him from smoking in Germany, attracted in Italy the loud contempt of those accomplished

creatures—the Anglo-Italians. The Duchess of Derwentwater, who saluted with equal naïveté a Cardinal, or a Captain of banditti, was once almost determined to exclude Mr. Cleveland from her conversazione, because he looked so much like an Englishman ; and at Florence he was still more unpopular ; for he abused Velluti, and pasquinaded his patroness.

Although possessed of no fortune, from the respectability of his connections, and the reputation of his abilities, he entered Parliament at an early age. His success was eminent. It was at this period that he formed a great friendship with the present Marquess of Carabas, many years his senior, and then Under-Secretary of State. His exertions for the party to which Mr. Under-Secretary Lorraine belonged were unremitting ; and it was mainly through their influence, that a great promotion took place in the official appointments of the party. When the hour of reward came, Mr. Lorraine and his friends unfortunately forgot their youthful champion. He remonstrated, and they smiled : he reminded them of private friendship, and they answered him with political expediency. Mr. Cleveland went down to the House, and attacked his old co-mates in a spirit of unexampled bitterness. He examined in review the various members of the party that had deserted him. They trembled on their seats, while they writhed beneath the keenness of his satire : but when the orator came to Mr. President Lorraine, he flourished the tomahawk on high, like a wild Indian chieftain ; and the attack was so awfully severe, so overpowering, so annihilating, that even this hackneyed and hardened official trembled, turned pale, and quitted the house. Cleveland's triumph was splendid, but it was only for a night. Disgusted with mankind, he scouted the thousand offers of political connections which crowded upon him ; and, having succeeded in making an arrangement with his creditors, he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

By the interest of his friends, he procured a judicial

situation of sufficient emolument, but of local duty ; and to fulfil this duty he was obliged to reside in North Wales. The locality, indeed, suited him well, for he was sick of the world at nine-and-twenty ; and, carrying his beautiful and newly married wife from the world—which, without him she could not love—Mr. Cleveland enjoyed all the luxuries of a cottage ornée, in the most romantic part of the Principality. Here were born unto him a son and daughter, beautiful children, upon whom the father lavished all the affection which Nature had intended for the world.

Four years had Cleveland now passed in his solitude,—it must not be concealed, an unhappy man. A thousand times, during the first year of his retirement, he cursed the moment of excitation which had banished him from the world ; for he found himself without resources, and restless as a curbed courser. Like many men who are born to be orators—like Curran, and like Fox,—Cleveland was not blessed, or cursed, with the faculty of composition ; and indeed, had his pen been that of a ready writer, pique would have prevented him from delighting or instructing a world, whose nature he endeavoured to persuade himself was base, and whose applause ought consequently to be valueless. In the second year he endeavoured to while away his time, by interesting himself in those pursuits which Nature has kindly provided for country gentlemen. Farming kept him alive six months ; but, at length, his was the prize ox ; and, having gained a cup, he got wearied of kine too prime for eating ; wheat, too fine for the composition of the staff of life ; and ploughs so ingeniously contrived, that the very ingenuity prevented them from being useful. Cleveland was now seen wandering over the moors, and mountains, with a gun over his shoulder, and a couple of pointers at his heels ; but ennui returned in spite of his *patent percussion* ; and so, at length, tired of being a sportsman, he almost became what he had fancied himself in an hour of passion,—a misanthrope.

With the aid of soda-water and Mr. Sadler, Vivian had succeeded, the morning after the Cabinet-dinner, in getting the Marquess up at a tolerably early hour ; and, after having been closeted with his Lordship for a considerable time, he left Château Désir.

Vivian travelled night and day, until he stopped at KENRICH LODGE.—Such was the correct style of Mr. Cleveland's abode. What was he to do now ? After some deliberation, he despatched a note to Mr. Cleveland, informing him, 'that he (Mr. Grey) was the bearer, from England, to Mr. Cleveland, of a "communication of importance."' Under the circumstances of the case, he observed that he had declined bringing any letters of introduction. He was quite aware, therefore, that he should have no right to complain, if he had to travel back three hundred miles without having the honour of an interview ; but he trusted that this necessary breach of etiquette would be overlooked.'

The note produced the desired effect ; and an appointment was made for Mr. Grey to call at Kenrich Lodge on the following morning.

Vivian, as he entered the room, took a rapid glance at the master of Kenrich Lodge. Mr. Cleveland was a tall and elegantly formed man, with a face which might have been a model for manly beauty. He came forward to receive Vivian, with a Newfoundland dog on one side, and a large black greyhound on the other ; and the two animals, after having elaborately examined the stranger, divided between them the luxuries of the rug. The reception which Mr. Cleveland gave our hero, was cold and constrained in the extreme, but it did not appear to be purposely uncivil ; and Vivian flattered himself that his manner was not unusually stiff.

'I do not know whether I have the honour of addressing the son of the author of —— ?' said Mr. Cleveland, with a frowning countenance, which was intended to be courteous.

'I have the honour of being the son of Mr. Grey.'

‘Your father, Sir, is a most amiable, and able man. I had the pleasure of his acquaintance when I was in London many years ago, at a time when Mr. Vivian Grey was not entrusted, I rather imagine, with missions “*of importance*.”’—Although Mr. Cleveland smiled when he said this, his smile was anything but a gracious one. The subdued satire of his keen eye burst out for an instant, and he looked as if he would have said, ‘Who is this youngster who is trespassing upon my retirement?’

Vivian had, unbidden, seated himself by the side of Mr. Cleveland’s library-table; and, not knowing exactly how to proceed, was employing himself by making a calculation, whether there were more black than white spots on the body of the old Newfoundland, who was now apparently most happily slumbering.

‘Well, Sir!’ continued the Newfoundland’s master, ‘the nature of your communication? I am fond of coming to the point.’

Now this was precisely the thing which Vivian had determined not to do; and so *he diplomatised*, in order to gain time.—‘In stating, Mr. Cleveland, that the communication which I had to make was one of *importance*, I beg it to be understood, that it was with reference merely to *my* opinion of its nature that that phrase was used, and not as relative to the possible, or, allow me to say the probable, opinion of Mr. Cleveland.’

‘Well, Sir!’ said that gentleman, with a somewhat disappointed air.

‘As to the purport or nature of the communication, it is,’ said Vivian, with one of his sweetest cadences, and, looking up to Mr. Cleveland’s face, with an eye expressive of all kindness,—‘it is of a *political* nature.’

‘Well, Sir!’ again exclaimed Cleveland; looking very anxious, and moving restlessly on his library chair.

‘When we take into consideration, Mr. Cleveland, the present aspect of the political world; when we call to mind the present situation of the two great political parties, you will not be surprised, I feel confident, when

I mention that certain personages have thought that the season was at hand, when a move might be made in the political world with very considerable effect——’

‘Mr. Grey, what am I to understand?’ interrupted Mr. Cleveland, who began to suspect that the envoy was no greenhorn.

‘I feel confident, Mr. Cleveland, that I am doing very imperfect justice to the mission with which I am intrusted; but, Sir, you must be aware that the delicate nature of such disclosures, and——’

‘Mr. Grey, I feel confident that you do not doubt my honour; and, as for the rest, the world has, I believe, some foolish tales about me; but, believe me, *you* shall be listened to with patience. I am certain that, whatever may be the communication, Mr. Vivian Grey is a gentleman, who will do its merits justice.’

And now Vivian, having succeeded in exciting Cleveland’s curiosity, and securing himself the certainty of a hearing, and having also made a favourable impression, dropped the diplomatist altogether, and was explicit enough for a Spartan.

‘Certain Noblemen and Gentlemen of eminence, and influence, hitherto considered as props of the —— party, are about to take a novel and decided course next Session. It is to obtain the aid, and personal co-operation of Mr. Cleveland, that I am now in Wales.’

‘Mr. Grey, I have promised to listen to you with patience:—you are too young a man to know much perhaps of the history of so insignificant a personage as myself; otherwise, you would have been aware, that there is no subject in the world on which I am less inclined to converse, than that of politics. If I were entitled to take such a liberty, I would beseech you to think of them as little as *I* do;—but enough of this: who is the mover of the party?’

‘My Lord Courtown is a distinguished member of it.’

‘Courtown—Courtown; respectable certainly: but

surely the good Viscount's skull is not exactly the head for the chief of a cabal ?'

'There is my Lord Beaconsfield.'

'Powerful—but a dolt.'

'Well,' thought Vivian, 'it must out *at last*; and so to it boldly. And, Mr. Cleveland, there is little fear that we may secure the powerful interest, and tried talents of—the Marquess of Carabas.'

'The Marquess of Carabas !' almost shrieked Mr. Cleveland, as he started from his seat and paced the room with hurried steps; and the greyhound and the Newfoundland jumped up from their rug, shook themselves, growled, and then imitated their master in promenading the apartment, but with more dignified and stately paces.—'The Marquess of Carabas !' Now, Mr. Grey, speak to me with the frankness which one high-bred gentleman should use to another;—is the Marquess of Carabas privy to this application ?'

'He himself proposed it.'

'Then, Sir, is he baser than even *I* conceived. Oh ! Mr. Grey, I am a man spare of my speech to those with whom I am unacquainted; and the world calls me a soured, malicious man. And yet, when I think for a moment, that one so young as you are, endued as I must suppose with no ordinary talents, and actuated as I will believe with a pure and honourable spirit, should be the dupe, or tool, or even present friend, of such a creature as this perjured Peer, I could really play the woman—and weep.'

'Mr. Cleveland,' said Vivian—and the drop which glistened in his eye, properly responded to the tear of passion which slowly quivered down his companion's cheek,—'I am grateful for your kindness; and although we shall most probably part, in a few hours, never to meet again, I will speak to you with the frankness which you have merited, and to which I feel you are entitled. I am *not* the dupe of the Marquess of Carabas; I am *not*, I trust, the dupe, or tool, of any one whatever. Believe

me, Sir, there is that at work in England, which, taken at the tide, may lead on to fortune. I see this, Sir,—I, a young man, uncommitted in political principles, unconnected in public life, feeling some confidence, I confess, in my own abilities, but desirous of availing myself, at the same time, of the powers of others. Thus situated, I find myself working for the same end as my Lord Carabas, and twenty other men of similar calibre, mental and moral; and, Sir, am I to play the hermit in the drama of life, because, perchance, my fellow-actors may be sometimes fools, and occasionally knaves. Oh! Mr. Cleveland, if the Marquess of Carabas has done you the ill service which Fame says he has, your sweetest revenge will be to make *him*, *your* tool; your most perfect triumph, to rise to power by his influence.

‘I confess that I am desirous of finding in you the companion of my career. Your splendid talents have long commanded my admiration; and, as you have given *me* credit for something like good feeling, I will say that my wish to find in you a colleague is greatly increased, when I see that those splendid talents are even the least estimable points in Mr. Cleveland’s character. But, Sir, perhaps all this time I am in error,—perhaps Mr. Cleveland is, as the world reports him, no longer the ambitious being who once commanded the admiration of a listening Senate;—perhaps, convinced of the vanity of human wishes, Mr. Cleveland would rather devote his attention to the furtherance of the interests of his immediate circle;—and, having schooled his intellect in the Universities of two nations, is probably content to pass the hours of his life in mediating in the quarrels of a country village.’

Vivian ceased. Cleveland heard him, with his head resting on both his arms. He started at the last expression, and something like a blush suffused his cheek, but he did not reply. At last he jumped up, and rang the bell. ‘Come, come, Mr. Grey, said he, ‘I am in no humour for politics this morning. You shall not, at any rate, visit Wales for nothing. Morris! send down to

the village for all the sacs and portmanteaus belonging to this gentleman. Even we cottagers have a bed for a friend, Mr. Grey :—come, and I will introduce you to my wife.'

CHAPTER II

A COLLEAGUE

AND Vivian was now an inmate of Kenrich Lodge. It would have been difficult to have conceived a life of more pure happiness, than that which was apparently enjoyed by its gifted master. A beautiful wife, and lovely children, and a romantic situation, and an income sufficient, not only for their own, but for the wants of all their necessitous neighbours ;—what more could man wish ? Answer me, thou inexplicable myriad of sensations, which the world calls human nature !

Three days passed over in most delightful converse. It was so long since Cleveland had seen any one fresh from the former scenes of his life, that the company of any one would have been delightful ; but here was a companion who knew every one, everything, full of wit, and anecdote, and literature, and fashion ; and then so engaging in his manners, and with such a winning voice.

The heart of Cleveland relented : his stern manner gave way ; all his former warm and generous feeling gained the ascendant ; he was in turn amusing, communicative, and engaging. Finding that he could please another, he began to be pleased himself. The nature of the business on which Vivian was his guest, rendered confidence necessary ; confidence begets kindness. In a few days, Vivian necessarily became more acquainted with Mr. Cleveland's disposition, and situation, than if they had been acquainted for as many years ; in short,

They talked with open heart and tongue,
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends.

Vivian, for some time, dwelt upon everything but the immediate subject of his mission; but when, after the experience of a few days, their hearts were open to each other, and they had mutually begun to discover, that there was a most astonishing similarity in their principles, their tastes, their feelings, then the magician poured forth his incantation, and raised the once-laid ghost of Cleveland's ambition. The recluse agreed to take the lead of *the Carabas party*. He was to leave Wales immediately and resign his place; in return for which, the nephew of Lord Courtown was immediately to give up, in his favour, an office of considerable emolument; and, having thus provided some certainty for his family, Frederick Cleveland prepared himself to combat for a more important office.

CHAPTER III

THE ARRIVAL

'IS Mr. Cleveland handsome?' asked Mrs. Felix Lorraine of Vivian, immediately on his return, 'and what colour are his eyes?'

'Upon my honour, I have not the least recollection of ever looking at them; but I believe he is not blind.'

'How foolish you are! now tell me, pray, *point de moquerie*, is he amusing?'

'What does Mrs. Felix Lorraine mean by *amusing*?' asked Vivian with an arch smile.

'Oh! you always tease me with your definitions; Go away—I'll quarrel with you.'

'Oh! by the bye, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, how is Colonel Delmington?'—

Vivian redeemed his pledge: Mr. Cleveland arrived. It was the wish of the Marquess, if possible, not to meet his old friend till dinner-time. He thought that, surrounded by his guests and backed by his bottle, certain

awkward senatorial reminiscences might be got over. But, unfortunately, Mr. Cleveland arrived about an hour before dinner, and, as it was a cold autumnal day, most of the visitors, who were staying at Château Désir, were assembled in the drawing-room. The Marquess sallied forward to receive his guest with a most dignified countenance, and a most aristocratic step ; but, before he had got half-way, his coronation pace degenerated into a strut, and then into a shamble, and with an awkward and confused countenance, half impudent, and half flinching, he held forward his left hand to his newly-arrived visitor. Mr. Cleveland looked terrifically courteous, and amiably arrogant. He greeted the Marquess with a smile, at once gracious, and grim, and looked something like Goliath, as you see the Philistine depicted in some old German painting, looking down upon the pigmy fighting men of Israel.

As is generally the custom, when there is a great deal to be arranged, and many points to be settled, days flew over, and very little of the future system of the party was matured. Vivian made one or two ineffectual struggles to bring the Marquess to a business-like habit of mind, but his Lordship never dared trust himself alone with Cleveland, and indeed almost lost the power of speech when in presence of the future leader of his party ; so, in the morning, the Marquess played off the two lords, and the Baronet against his former friend, and then to compensate for not meeting Mr. Cleveland in the morning, he was particularly courteous to him at dinner-time, and asked him always ‘how he liked his ride?’ and invariably took wine with him. As for the rest of the day, he had particularly requested his faithful counsellor, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, ‘for God’s sake to take this man off his shoulders’ ; and so that lady, with her usual kindness, and merely to oblige his Lordship, was good enough to patronise Mr. Cleveland, and on the fourth day was taking a moon-lit walk with him.

Mr. Cleveland had now been ten days at Château

Désir, and was to take his departure the next morning for Wales, in order to arrange everything for his immediate settlement in the Metropolis. Every point of importance was postponed until their meeting in London. Mr. Cleveland only agreed to take the lead of the party in the Commons, and received the personal pledge of Lord Courtown as to the promised office.

It was a September day, and to escape from the excessive heat of the sun, and at the same time to enjoy the freshness of the air, Vivian was writing his letters in the conservatory, which opened into one of the drawing-rooms. The numerous party, which then honoured the Château with their presence, were out, as he conceived, on a picnic excursion to the Elfin's Well, a beautiful spot about ten miles off; and among the adventurers were, as he imagined, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and Mr. Cleveland.

Vivian was rather surprised at hearing voices in the adjoining room, and he was still more so, when, on looking round, he found that the sounds proceeded from the very two individuals whom he thought were far away. Some tall American plants concealed him from their view, but he observed all that passed distinctly, and a singular scene it was. Mrs. Felix Lorraine was on her knees at the feet of Mr. Cleveland; her countenance indicated the most contrary passions, contending, as it were, for mastery—Supplication—Anger—and, shall I call it?—*Love*. Her companion's countenance was hid, but it was evident that it was not wreathed with smiles: there were a few hurried sentences uttered, and then both quitted the room at different doors—the lady in despair,—and the gentleman—in disgust.

CHAPTER IV

THE ELFIN'S WELL

AND now Château Désir was almost deserted. Mrs. Million continued her progress northward. The Courtowns and the Beaconsfields, and the Scropes, quitted immediately after Mr. Cleveland; and when the families that form the matériel of the visiting corps retire, the nameless nothings that are always lounging about the country mansions of the great, such as artists, tourists, *littérateurs*, and other live stock, soon disappear. Mr. Vivian Grey agreed to stay another fortnight, at the particular request of the Marquess.

Very few days had passed, ere Vivian was exceedingly struck at the decided change which suddenly took place in his Lordship's general behaviour towards him.

The Marquess grew reserved and uncommunicative, scarcely mentioning 'the great business,' which had previously been the sole subject of his conversation, but to find fault with some arrangement, and exhibiting, whenever his name was mentioned, a marked acrimony against Mr. Cleveland. This rapid change alarmed, as much as it astonished Vivian, and he mentioned his feelings and observations to Mrs. Felix Lorraine. That lady agreed with him, that something certainly was wrong; but could not, unfortunately, afford him any clue to the mystery. She expressed the liveliest solicitude that any misunderstanding should be put an end to, and offered her services for that purpose.

In spite, however, of her well-expressed anxiety, Vivian had his own ideas on the subject; and, determined to unravel the affair, he had recourse to a person, with whom he seldom interchanged a sentence—the Marchioness.

'I hope your Ladyship is well to-day. I had a letter from Count Caumont this morning. He tells me, that

he has got the prettiest poodle from Paris that you can possibly conceive! waltzes like an angel, and acts proverbs on its hind feet.'

Her Ladyship's eyes glistened with admiration.

'I have told Caumont to send it me down immediately, and I shall then have the pleasure of presenting it to your Ladyship.'

Her Ladyship's eyes sparkled with delight.

'I think,' continued Vivian, 'I shall take a ride to-day. By the bye, how is the Marquess? he seems in low spirits lately.'

'Oh! Mr. Grey, I do not know what you have done to him,' said her Ladyship, settling at least a dozen bracelets; 'but—but——'

'But *what*, my lady?'

'He thinks—he thinks——'

'Thinks what, my lady?'

'That you have entered into a conspiracy, Mr. Grey.'

'Entered into a conspiracy!'

'Yes! Mr. Grey, a conspiracy—a conspiracy against the Marquess of Carabas, with Mr. Cleveland. He thinks that you have made him serve your purpose, and now you are going to get rid of him.'

'Well, that is excellent; and what else does he think?'

'He thinks you talk too loud,' said the Marchioness, still working at her bracelets.

'Well! that is shockingly vulgar! Allow me to recommend your Ladyship to alter the order of those bracelets, and place the blue and silver against the maroon. You may depend upon it, that is the true Vienna order—and what else does the Marquess say?'

'He thinks you are generally too authoritative. Not that I think so, Mr. Grey; I am sure your conduct to me has been most courteous—the blue and silver *next* to the maroon, did you say? Yes,—certainly it does look better. I have no doubt the Marquess is quite wrong, and I dare say you will set things right immediately.'

You will remember the pretty poodle, Mr. Grey? and you will not tell the Marquess I mentioned anything.'

'Oh! certainly not. I will give orders for them to book an inside place for the poodle, and send him down by the coach immediately. I must be off now. Remember the blue and silver *next* to the maroon. Good morning to your Ladyship!'

'Mrs. Felix Lorraine, I am your most obedient slave,' said Vivian Grey, as he met that lady on the landing-place;—'I can see no reason why I should not drive you this bright day to the Elfin's Well; we have long had an engagement to go there.'

The lady smiled a gracious assent; the pony phaeton was immediately ordered.

'How pleasant Lady Courtown and I used to discourse about martingales! I think I invented one, did not I? Pray, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, can you tell me what a martingale is? for upon my honour I have forgotten, or never knew.'

'If you found a martingale for the mother, Vivian, it had been well if you had found a curb for the daughter. Poor Cynthia! I had intended once to advise the Marchioness to interfere; but one forgets these things.'

'One does.—Oh! Mrs. Felix,' exclaimed Vivian, 'I told your admirable story of the Leyden Professor to Mrs. Cleveland. It is universally agreed to be the best ghost story extant.—I think you said you knew the Professor?'

'Oh, well! I have seen him often, and heard the story from his own lips. And, as I mentioned before, far from being superstitious, he was an esprit fort.—Do you know, Mr. Grey, I have such an interesting packet from Germany to-day; from my cousin, Baron Rodenstein; but I must keep all the stories for the evening;—come to my boudoir, and I will read them to you—there is one tale which I am sure will make a convert even of you. It happened to Rodenstein himself, and within these three months': added the lady in a serious tone.—The

Rodensteins are a singular family. My mother was a Rodenstein.—Do you think this beautiful?’ said Mrs. Felix, showing Vivian a small miniature which was attached to a chain round her neck. It was the portrait of a youth habited in the costume of a German student. His rich brown hair was flowing over his shoulders, and his dark-blue eyes beamed with such a look of mysterious inspiration, that they might have befitted a young prophet.

‘Very, *very* beautiful!’

‘Tis Max—Max Rodenstein,’ said the lady with a faltering voice. ‘He was killed at Leipsic, at the head of a band of his friends and fellow-students. Oh! Mr. Grey, this is a fair work of art, but if you had but seen the prototype, you would have gazed on this as on a dim and washed-out drawing. There was one portrait, indeed, which did him more justice—but then, that portrait was not the production of mortal pencil.’

Vivian looked at his companion with a somewhat astonished air, but Mrs. Felix Lorraine’s countenance was as little indicative of jesting, as that of the young student whose miniature rested on her bosom.

‘Did you say *not* the production of a mortal hand, Mrs. Felix Lorraine?’

‘I am afraid I shall weary you with my stories, but the one I am about to tell is so well evidenced, that I think even Mr. Vivian Grey will hear it without a sneer.’

‘A sneer! Oh! Ladylove, do I ever sneer?’

‘Max Rodenstein was the glory of his house. A being so beautiful in body, and in soul, you cannot imagine, and I will not attempt to describe. This miniature has given you some faint idea of his image, and yet this is only the copy of a copy. The only wish of the Baroness Rodenstein, which never could be accomplished, was the possession of a portrait of her youngest son—for no consideration could induce Max to allow his likeness to be taken. His old nurse had always told him, that the

moment his portrait was taken, he would die. The condition upon which such a beautiful being was allowed to remain in the world was, she always said, that his beauty should not be imitated. About three months before the battle of Leipsic, when Max was absent at the University, which was nearly four hundred miles from Rodenstein Castle, there arrived one morning a large case directed to the Baroness. On opening it, it was found to contain a picture—the portrait of her son. The colouring was so vivid, the general execution so miraculous, that for some moments they forgot to wonder at the incident in their admiration of the work of art. In one corner of the picture, in small characters, yet fresh, was an inscription, which on examining they found consisted of these words, "*Painted last night. Now, lady, thou hast thy wish.*" My aunt sunk into the Baron's arms.

'In silence and in trembling the wonderful portrait was suspended over the fireplace of my aunt's most favourite apartment. The next day they received letters from Max. He was quite well, but mentioned nothing of the mysterious painting.

'Three months afterwards, as a lady was sitting alone in the Baroness's room, and gazing on the portrait of him she loved right dearly, she suddenly started from her seat, and would have shrieked, had not an indefinable sensation prevented her. The eyes of the portrait moved. The lady stood leaning on a chair, pale, and trembling like an aspen, but gazing steadfastly on the animated portrait. It was no illusion of a heated fancy; again the eyelids trembled, there was a melancholy smile, and then they closed. The clock of Rodenstein Castle struck three. Between astonishment and fear the Lady was tearless. Three days afterwards came the news of the battle of Leipsic, and at the very moment that the eyes of the portrait closed, Max Rodenstein had been pierced by a Polish Lancer.'

'And who was this wonderful lady, the witness of this wonderful incident?' asked Vivian.

‘That lady was myself.’

There was something so singular in the tone of Mrs. Felix Lorraine’s voice, and so peculiar in the expression of her countenance, as she uttered these words, that the jest died on Vivian’s tongue ; and for want of something better to do, he lashed the little ponies, who were already scampering at their full speed.

The road to the Elfin’s Well ran through the wildest parts of the park ; and after an hour and a half’s drive, they reached the fairy spot. It was a beautiful and pellucid spring, that bubbled up in a small wild dell, which, nurtured by the flowing stream, was singularly fresh and green. Above the spring, the taste of the Marquess, or the Marquess’s steward, had erected a Gothic arch of grey stone, round which grew a few fine birch trees. In short, Nature had intended the spot for *picnics*. There was fine water, and an interesting tradition ; and as the parties always bring, or always should bring, a trained punster, champagne, and cold pasties, what more ought Nature to have provided ?

‘Come, Mrs. Lorraine, I will tie Gypsey to this ash, and then you and I will rest ourselves beneath these birch trees, just where the fairies dance.’

‘Oh, delightful !’

‘Now truly, we should have some book of beautiful poetry to while away an hour. You will blame me for not bringing one. Do not. I would sooner listen to your voice ; and, indeed, there is a subject on which I wish to ask your particular advice.’

‘Is there ?’

‘I have been thinking that this is a somewhat rash step of the Marquess,—this throwing himself into the arms of his former bitterest enemy, Cleveland.’

‘You really think so ?’

‘Why, Mrs. Lorraine, does it appear to you to be the most prudent course of action, which could have been conceived ?’

‘Certainly not.’

‘You agree with me, then, that there is, if not cause for regret at this engagement, at least for reflection on its probable consequences?’

‘I quite agree with you.’

‘I know you do. I have had some conversation with the Marquess upon this subject, this very morning.’

‘Have you?’ eagerly exclaimed the lady, and she looked pale, and breathed short.

‘Ay; and he tells me you have made some very sensible observations on the subject. ’Tis pity they were not made before Mr. Cleveland left, the mischief might then have been prevented.’

‘I certainly have made *some* observations.’

‘And very kind of you; what a blessing for the Marquess to have such a friend!’

‘I spoke to him,’ said Mrs. Felix, with a more assured tone, ‘in much the same spirit as you have been addressing me. It does, indeed, seem a most imprudent act, and I thought it my duty to tell him so.’

‘Ay, no doubt; but how came you, lady fair, to imagine that *I* was also a person to be dreaded by his Lordship—*I*, Vivian Grey?’

‘Did I say *you*?’ asked the lady, pale as death—

‘Did you *not*, Mrs. Felix Lorraine? Have you not, regardless of my interests, in the most unwarrantable and unjustifiable manner—have you not, to gratify some private pique which you entertain against Mr. Cleveland, have you not, I ask you, poisoned the Marquess’s mind against one, who never did aught to you, but what was kind and *honourable*?’

‘I have been imprudent—I confess it—I have spoken somewhat loosely.’

‘Now, madam, listen to me once more,’ and Vivian grasped her hand—‘What has passed between you and Mr. Cleveland, it is not for me to inquire—I give you my word of honour, that he never even mentioned your name to me. I can scarcely understand how any man could have incurred the deadly hatred which you appear

to entertain for him. I repeat, I can contemplate no situation in which you could be placed together, which would justify such behaviour. It could *not* be justified, even if he had spurned you while——*kneeling at his feet.*'

Mrs. Felix Lorraine shrieked and fainted. A sprinkling from the fairy stream soon recovered her. 'Spare me ! spare me !' she faintly cried : 'do not expose me.'

'Mrs. Lorraine, I have no wish. I have spoken thus explicitly, that we may not again misunderstand each other—I have spoken thus explicitly, I say, that I may not be under the necessity of speaking again, for if I speak again, it must not be to Mrs. Felix Lorraine, there is my hand, and now let the Elfin's Well be blotted out of our memories.'

Vivian drove rapidly home, and endeavoured to talk in his usual tone, and with his usual spirit ; but his companion could not be excited. Once, ay twice, she pressed his hand, and as he assisted her from the phaeton, she murmured something like a—blessing. She ran upstairs immediately. Vivian had to give some directions about the ponies ; Gypsy was ill, or Fanny had a cold, or something of the kind, and so he was detained for about a quarter of an hour before the house, speaking most learnedly to grooms, and consulting on cases with a skilled gravity worthy of Professor Coleman.

When he entered the parlour he found the luncheon prepared, and Mrs. Felix pressed him very earnestly to take some refreshment. He was indeed wearied, and agreed to take a glass of hock and seltzer.

'Let me mix it for you,' said Mrs. Felix ; 'do you like sugar ?'

Tired with his drive, Vivian Grey was leaning on the mantelpiece, with his eyes vacantly gazing on the looking-glass, which rested on the marble slab. It was by pure accident that, reflected in the mirror, he distinctly beheld Mrs. Felix Lorraine open a small silver box, and throw some powder into the tumbler which she was preparing for him. She was leaning down, with her back

almost turned to the glass, but still Vivian saw it—*distinctly*. A sickness came over him, and ere he could recover himself, his Hebe tapped him on the shoulder—

‘Here, drink, drink while it is effervescent.’

‘I cannot drink,’ said Vivian, ‘I am not thirsty—I am too hot—I am anything——’

‘How foolish you are ! It will be quite spoiled.’

‘No, no, the dog shall have it. Here, Fidele, you look thirsty enough—come here——’

‘Mr. Grey, I do not mix tumblers for dogs,’ said the lady, rather agitated : ‘if you will not take it,’ and she held it once more before him, ‘here it goes for ever.’ So saying, she emptied the tumbler into a large globe of glass, in which some gold and silver fishes were swimming their endless rounds.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSERVATORY

THIS last specimen of Mrs. Felix Lorraine was somewhat too much, even for the steeled nerves of Vivian Grey, and he sought his chamber for relief.

‘Is it possible ? Can I believe my senses ? Or has some dæmon, as we read of in old tales, mocked me in a magic mirror ? I can believe anything.—Oh ! my heart is very sick ! I once imagined, that I was using this woman for my purpose. Is it possible, that aught of good can come to one who is forced to make use of such evil instruments as these ? A horrible thought sometimes comes over my spirit. I fancy, that in this mysterious foreigner, that in this woman, I have met a kind of *double* of myself. The same wonderful knowledge of the human mind, the same sweetness of voice, the same miraculous management which has brought us both under the same roof : yet do I find her the most abandoned of all beings ; a creature guilty of that, which, even in this guilty age, I

thought was obsolete. And is it possible that I am like her? that I can resemble her? that even the indefinite shadow of my most unhallowed thought, can, for a moment, be as vile as her righteousness? Oh, God! the system of my existence seems to stop: I cannot breathe.' He flung himself upon his bed, and felt for a moment as if he had quaffed the poisoned draught so lately offered.

'It is not so—it cannot be so—it shall not be so! In seeking the Marquess, I was unquestionably impelled by a mere feeling of self-interest; but I have advised him to no course of action, in which his welfare is not equally consulted with my own. Indeed, if not Principle, Interest would make me act faithfully towards him, for my fortunes are bound up in his. But am I entitled—I, who can lose nothing; am I entitled to play with other men's fortunes? Am I, all this time, deceiving myself with some wretched sophistry? Am I then an intellectual Don Juan, reckless of human minds, as he was of human bodies—a spiritual libertine? But why this wild declamation? Whatever I have done, it is too late to recede; even this very moment, *delay is destruction*, for now, it is not a question as to the ultimate prosperity of our worldly prospects, but the immediate safety of our very bodies. Poison! Oh, God! Oh, God! Away with all fear—all repentance—all thought of past—all reckoning of future. If I be the Juan that I fancied myself, then, Heaven be praised! I have a confidant in all my trouble; the most faithful of counsellors; the craftiest of valets; a Leporello often tried, and never found wanting—my own good mind. And now, thou female fiend! the battle is to the strongest; and I see right well, that the struggle between two such spirits will be a long and a fearful one. Woe, I say, to the vanquished! You must be dealt with by arts, which even yourself cannot conceive. Your boasted knowledge of human nature shall not again stand you in stead; for, mark me, from henceforward, Vivian Grey's conduct towards you shall have no precedent in human nature.'

As Vivian re-entered the drawing-room, he met a servant carrying in the globe of gold and silver fishes.

‘What, still in your pelisse, Mrs. Lorraine,’ said Vivian. ‘Nay, I hardly wonder at it, for surely, a prettier pelisse never yet fitted prettier form. You have certainly a most admirable taste in dress; and this the more surprises me, for it is generally your plain personage, that is the most *recherché* in frills, and fans, and flounces.’

The lady smiled.

‘Oh! by the bye,’ continued her companion, ‘I have a letter from Cleveland this morning. I wonder how any misunderstanding could possibly have existed between you, for he speaks of you in *such* terms.’

‘What does he say?’ was the quick question.

‘Oh! *what does he say?*’ drawled out Vivian; and he yawned, and was most provokingly uncommunicative.

‘Come, come, Mr. Grey, *do* tell me.’

‘Oh! tell you—certainly. Come, let us walk together in the conservatory’: so saying, he took the lady by the hand, and they left the room.

‘And now for the letter, Mr. Grey!’

‘Ay, now for the letter’; and Vivian slowly drew an epistle from his pocket, and therefrom read some exceedingly sweet passages, which made Mrs. Felix Lorraine’s very heart blood tingle. Considering that Vivian Grey had never in his life received a single letter from Mr. Cleveland, this was tolerably well: but he was always an admirable Improvisatore! ‘I am sure that when Cleveland comes to town everything will be explained; I am sure, at least, that it will not be *my* fault, if you are not the *best* friends. I am heroic in saying all this, Mrs. Lorraine; there was a time, when—(and here Vivian seemed so agitated that he could scarcely proceed)—there was a time when I could have called that man—*liar*! who would have prophesied that Vivian Grey could have assisted another in rivetting the affections of Mrs. Felix Lorraine;—but enough of this. I am a weak inexperienced boy, and misinterpret, perhaps, that, which is

merely the compassionate kindness natural to all women, into a feeling of a higher nature. But, I must learn to contain myself; I really do feel quite ashamed of my behaviour about the tumbler to-day: to act with such unwarrantable unkindness, merely because I had remembered that you once performed the same kind office for Colonel Delmington, was indeed too bad!

‘Colonel Delmington is a vain, empty-headed fool. Do not think of him, my dear Mr. Grey,’ said Mrs. Felix, with a countenance beaming with smiles.

‘Well, I will not; and I will try to behave like a man; like a man of the world, I should say: but indeed you must excuse the warm feelings of a youth: and truly, when I call to mind the first days of our acquaintance, and then remember that our moon-lit walks are gone for ever—and that our——’

‘Nay, do not believe so, my dear Vivian; believe me, as I ever shall be, your friend, your——’

‘I will, I will, my dear, my own Amalia!’

CHAPTER VI

THE LONG GALLERY

IT was an Autumnal night—the wind was capricious and changeable as a petted beauty, or an Italian greyhound, or a shot silk. Now the breeze blew so fresh, that the white clouds dashed along the sky, as if they bore a band of witches, too late for their sabbath meeting—or some other mischief: and now, lulled and soft as the breath of a slumbering infant, you might almost have fancied it Midsummer’s Eve; and the bright moon, with her starry court, reigned undisturbed in the light blue sky. Vivian Grey was leaning against an old beech tree in the most secluded part of the park, and was gazing on the moon.

Oh! thou bright moon! thou object of my first

love! thou shalt not escape an invocation, although, perchance at this very moment, some varlet sonneteer is prating of 'thy boy Endymion,' and 'thy silver bow.' Here to thee, Queen of the Night! in whatever name thou most delightest! Or Bendis, as they hailed thee in rugged Thrace; or Bubastis, as they howled to thee in mysterious Egypt; or Dian, as they sacrificed to thee in gorgeous Rome; or Artemis, as they sighed to thee on the bright plains of ever-glorious Greece! Why is it, that all men gaze on thee? Why is it, that all men love thee? Why is it, that all men worship thee?

Shine on, shine on, Sultana of the soul! the Passions are thy eunuch slaves; Ambition gazes on thee, and his burning brow is cooled, and his fitful pulse is calm. Grief wanders in her moonlit walk, and sheds no tear; and when thy crescent smiles, the lustre of Joy's revelling eye is dusked. Quick Anger, in thy light, forgets revenge; and even dove-eyed Hope feeds on no future joys, when gazing on the miracle of thy beauty.

Shine on, shine on! although a pure Virgin, thou art the mighty mother of all abstraction! The eye of the weary peasant returning from his daily toil, and the rapt gaze of the inspired poet, are alike fixed on thee; thou stillest the roar of marching armies; and who can doubt thy influence o'er the waves, who has witnessed the wide Atlantic sleeping under thy silver beams?

Shine on, shine on! they say thou art Earth's satellite; yet when I do gaze on thee, my thoughts are not of thy Suzerain. They teach us that thy power is a fable, and that thy divinity is a dream. Oh, thou bright Queen! I will be no traitor to thy sweet authority; and verily, I will not believe that thy influence o'er our hearts, is, at this moment, less potent, than when we worshipped in thy glittering fane of Ephesus, or trembled at the dark horrors of thine Arician rites. Then, hail to thee, Queen of the Night! Hail to thee, Diana, Triformis, Cynthia, Orthia, Taurica, ever mighty, ever lovely, ever holy! Hail! hail! hail!

If I were a metaphysician, I would tell you why Vivian Grey had been gazing two hours on the moon ; for I could then present you with a most logical programme of the march of his ideas, since he whispered in his last honied speech in the ear of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, at dinner time, until this very moment, when he did not even remember that such a being as Mrs. Felix Lorraine breathed. Glory to the metaphysician's all-perfect theory ! When they can tell me why, at a bright banquet, the thought of death has flashed across my mind, who fear not death ; when they can tell me, why, at the burial of my beloved friend, when my very heart-strings seemed bursting, my sorrow has been mocked by the involuntary remembrance of ludicrous adventures, and grotesque tales ; when they can tell me why, in a dark mountain pass, I have thought of an absent woman's eyes ; or why, when in the very act of squeezing the third lime into a beaker of Burgundy cup, my memory hath been of lean apothecaries, and their vile drugs ;—why then, I say again, glory to the metaphysician's all-perfect theory ! and fare you well, sweet world, and you, my merry masters, whom, perhaps, I have studied somewhat too cunningly : *nosce teipsum* shall be my motto—I will doff my travelling cap, and on with the monk's cowl.

There are mysterious moments in some men's lives, when the faces of human beings are very agony to them, and when the sound of the human voice is jarring as discordant music. These fits are not the consequence of violent or contending passions ; they grow not out of sorrow, nor joy, nor hope, nor fear, nor hatred, nor despair. For in the hour of affliction, the tones of our fellow-creatures are ravishing as the most delicate lute ; and in the flush moment of joy, where is the smiler, who loves not a witness to his revelry, or a listener to his good fortune ? Fear makes us feel our humanity, and then we fly to men, and Hope is the parent of kindness. The misanthrope and the reckless, are neither agitated, nor agonised. It is in these moments, that men find in

Nature that congeniality of spirit, which they seek for, in vain, in their own species. It is in these moments, that we sit by the side of a waterfall, and listen to its music the live-day long. It is in these moments, that we gaze upon the moon. It is in these moments, that Nature becomes our Egeria; and refreshed and renovated by this beautiful communion, we return to the world, better enabled to fight our parts in the hot war of passions, to perform the great duties, for which man appears to have been created,—to love, to hate, to slander, and to slay.

It was past midnight, and Vivian was at a considerable distance from the Château. He proposed entering by a side-door, which led into the billiard-room, and from thence crossing the Long Gallery, he could easily reach his apartment, without disturbing any of the household. His way led through the little gate, at which he had parted with Mrs. Felix Lorraine on the first day of their meeting.

As he softly opened the door which led into the Long Gallery, he found he was not alone: leaning against one of the casements, was a female. Her profile was to Vivian as he entered, and the moon, which shone bright through the window, lit up a countenance, which he might be excused for not immediately recognising as that of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. She was gazing stedfastly, but her eye did not seem fixed upon any particular object. Her features appeared convulsed, but their contortions were not momentary, and pale as death, a hideous grin seemed chiselled on her idiot countenance.

Vivian scarcely knew whether to stay or to retire. Desirous not to disturb her, he determined not even to breathe; and, as is generally the case, his very exertions to be silent made him nervous; and to save himself from being stifled, he coughed.

Mrs. Lorraine immediately started, and stared wildly around her; and when her eye caught Vivian's, there was a sound in her throat something like the death-rattle.

‘Who are you?’ she eagerly asked.

‘A friend, and Vivian Grey.’

‘Grey! how came you here?’ and she rushed forward and wildly seized his hand—and then she muttered to herself, ‘’tis flesh—’tis flesh.’

‘I have been playing, I fear, the mooncalf to-night; and find, that though I am a late watcher, I am not a solitary one.’

Mrs. Lorraine stared earnestly at him, and then she endeavoured to assume her usual expression of countenance; but the effort was too much for her. She dropped Vivian’s arm, and buried her face in her own hands. Vivian was retiring, when she again looked up. ‘Where are you going?’ she asked, with a quick voice.

‘To sleep—as I would advise all: ’tis much past midnight.’

‘You say not the truth. The brightness of your eye belies the sentence of your tongue. You are *not* for sleep.’

‘Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Lorraine, I really have been gaping for the last hour,’ said Vivian, and he moved on.

‘Mr. Grey! you are speaking to one who takes her answer from the eye, which does not deceive, and from the speaking lineaments of the face, which are Truth’s witnesses. Keep your voice for those who can credit man’s words. You *will* go, then. What! are you afraid of a woman, because “’tis past midnight,” and you are in an old gallery?’

‘Fear, Mrs. Lorraine, is not a word in my vocabulary.’

‘The words in your vocabulary are few, boy! as are the years of your age. He who sent you here this night, sent you here not to slumber. Come hither!’ and she led Vivian to the window: ‘what see you?’

‘I see Nature at rest, Mrs. Lorraine; and I would fain follow the example of beasts, birds, and fishes.’

‘Yet gaze upon this scene one second. See the distant hills, how beautifully their rich covering is tinted with the moonbeam! These nearer fir-trees—how radiantly their black skeleton forms are tipped with silver! and the old and thickly-foliaged oaks bathed in

light ! and the purple lake reflecting in its lustrous bosom another heaven ! Is it not a fair scene ? ’

‘ Beautiful ! Oh, most beautiful ! ’

‘ Yet, Vivian, where is the being for whom all this beauty existeth ? Where is your mighty creature—Man ? The peasant on his rough couch enjoys, perchance, slavery’s only service—money—sweet sleep ; or, waking in the night, curses at the same time his lot and his lord. And that lord is restless on some downy couch ; his night thoughts, not of this sheeny lake and this bright moon, but of some miserable creation of man’s artifice, some mighty nothing, which Nature knows not of, some offspring of her bastard child—Society. Why then is Nature loveliest when man looks not on her ? For whom, then, Vivian Grey, is this scene so fair ? ’

‘ For poets, lady ; for philosophers ; for all those superior spirits who require some relaxation from the world’s toils ; spirits who only commingle with humanity, on the condition that they may sometimes commune with Nature.’

‘ Superior spirits ! say you ? ’ and here they paced the gallery. ‘ When Valerian, first Lord Carabas, raised this fair castle—when, profuse for his posterity, all the genius of Italian art and Italian artists was lavished on this English palace ; when the stuffs, and statues, the marbles and the mirrors, the tapestry, and the carvings, and the paintings of Genoa, and Florence, and Venice, and Padua, and Vicenza, were obtained by him at miraculous cost, and with still more miraculous toil ; what think you would have been his sensations, if, while his soul was revelling in the futurity of his descendants keeping their state in this splendid pile, some wizard had foretold to him, that ere three centuries could elapse, the fortunes of his mighty family would be the sport of two individuals ; one of them, a foreigner unconnected in blood, or connected only in hatred ; and the other, a young adventurer alike unconnected with his race, in

blood, or in love ; a being, ruling all things by the power of his own genius, and reckless of all consequences, save his own prosperity. If the future had been revealed to my great ancestor, the Lord Valerian, think you, Vivian Grey, that you and I should be walking in this long gallery ?’

‘Really, Mrs. Lorraine, I have been so interested in discovering what people think in the nineteenth century, that I have had but little time to speculate on the possible opinions of an old gentleman who flourished in the sixteenth.’

‘You may sneer, sir ; but I ask you, if there are spirits so superior to that of the slumbering Lord of this castle, as those of Vivian Grey and Amalia Lorraine ; why may there not be spirits proportionately superior to our own ?’

‘If you are keeping me from my bed, Mrs. Lorraine, merely to lecture my conceit by proving that there are in this world wiser heads than that of Vivian Grey, on my honour, madam, you are giving yourself a great deal of unnecessary trouble.’

‘You *will* misunderstand me, then, you wilful boy !’

‘Nay, lady, I will not affect to misunderstand your meaning ; but I recognise, you know full well, no intermediate essence between my own good soul, and that ineffable and omnipotent spirit, in whose existence philosophers and priests alike agree.’

‘Omnipotent, and ineffable essence ! Oh ! leave such words to scholars, and to school-boys ! And think you, that such indefinite nothings, such unmeaning abstractions, can influence beings whose veins are full of blood, bubbling like this ?’ And here she grasped Vivian with a feverish hand—‘Omnipotent, and ineffable essence ! Oh ! I have lived in a land, where every mountain, and every stream, and every wood, and every ruin, has its legend, and its peculiar spirit ; a land, in whose dark forests, the midnight hunter, with his spirit-shout, scares the slumbers of the trembling serf ; a land,

from whose winding rivers, the fair-haired Undine welcomes the belated traveller to her fond, and fatal, embrace; and you talk to *me* of omnipotent and ineffable essences! Oh! miserable mocker!—It is not true, Vivian Grey; you are but echoing the world's deceit, and even at this hour of the night, you dare not speak as you do think. You worship no omnipotent and ineffable essence—you believe in no omnipotent and ineffable essence; shrined in the secret chamber of your soul, there is an image, before which you bow down in adoration, and that image is—YOURSELF. And truly when I do gaze upon your radiant eyes,' and here the lady's tone became more terrestrial,—‘and truly when I do look upon your luxuriant curls,’ and here the lady's small white hand played like lightning through Vivian's dark hair,—‘and truly when I do remember the beauty of your all-perfect form, I cannot deem your self-worship—a false idolatry’; and here the lady's arms were locked round Vivian's neck, and her head rested on his bosom.

‘Oh! Amalia! it would be far better for you to rest here, than to think of that, of which the knowledge is vanity.’

‘Vanity!’ shrieked Mrs. Lorraine, and she violently loosened her embrace, and extricated herself from the arm, which, rather in courtesy, than in kindness, had been wound round her delicate waist—‘Vanity! Oh! if you knew but what I know—Oh! if you had but seen what I have seen’—and here her voice failed her, and she stood motionless in the moonshine, with averted head and outstretched arms.

‘Amalia! this is very madness; for Heaven's sake calm yourself!’

‘Calm myself! Oh! it is madness; very, very madness! ’tis the madness of the fascinated bird; ’tis the madness of the murderer who is voluntarily broken on the wheel; ’tis the madness of the fawn, that gazes with adoration on the lurid glare of the anaconda's eye; ’tis the madness of woman who flies to the arms of her

—*Fate*’; and here she sprang like a tigress round Vivian’s neck, her long light hair bursting from its bands, and clustering down her shoulders.

And here was Vivian Grey, at past midnight, in this old gallery, with this wild woman clinging round his neck. The figures in the ancient tapestry looked living in the moon, and immediately opposite him was one compartment of some old mythological tale, in which were represented, grinning, in grim majesty,—THE FATES.

The wind now rose again, and the clouds which had vanished, began to re-assemble in the heavens. As the blue sky was gradually being covered, the gigantic figures of Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, became as gradually dimmer, and dimmer, and the grasp of Vivian’s fearful burthen looser, and looser. At last the moon was entirely hid, the figures of the Fates vanished, and Mrs. Felix Lorraine sank lifeless into his arms.

Vivian groped his way with difficulty to the nearest window, the very one at which she was leaning, when he first entered the gallery. He played with her wild curls; he whispered to her in a voice sweeter than the sweetest serenade; but she only raised her eyes from his breast, and stared wildly at him, and then clung round his neck with, if possible, a tighter grasp.

For nearly half an hour did Vivian stand leaning against the window, with his mystic and motionless companion. At length the wind again fell: there was a break in the sky, and a single star appeared in the midst of the clouds, surrounded with a little heaven of azure.

‘See there, see there!’ the lady cried, and then she unlocked her arms. ‘What would you give, Vivian Grey, to read that star?’

‘Am I more interested in that star, Amalia, than in any other of the bright host?’ asked Vivian, with a serious tone, for he thought it necessary to humour his companion.

‘Are you *not*? is it not the star of your destiny?’

‘Are you learned in all the learning of the Chaldeans too, lady?’

‘Oh, no, no, no!’ slowly murmured Mrs. Lorraine, and then she started; but Vivian seized her arms, and prevented her from again clasping his neck.

‘I must keep these pretty hands close prisoners,’ he said, smiling, ‘unless you promise to behave with more moderation. Come, my Amalia! you shall be my instructress! Why am I so interested in this brilliant star?’ and holding her hands in one of his, he wound his arm round her waist, and whispered her such words, as he thought might calm her troubled spirit. The wildness of her eyes gradually gave way; at length, she raised them to Vivian with a look of meek tenderness, and her head sank upon his breast.

‘It shines, it shines, it shines, Vivian!’ she softly whispered, ‘glory to thee, and woe to me! Nay, you need not hold my hands, I will not harm you. I cannot—’tis no use. Oh, Vivian! when we first met, how little did I know to whom I pledged myself!’

‘Amalia, forget these wild fancies, estrange yourself from the wild belief which has exercised so baneful an influence, not only over your mind, but over the very soul of the land from which you come. Recognise in me only your friend, and leave the other world to those who value it more, or more deserve it. Does not this fair earth contain sufficient of interest and enjoyment?’

‘Oh, Vivian! you speak with a sweet voice, but with a sceptic’s spirit. You know not what I know.’

‘Tell me then, my Amalia; let me share your secrets, provided they be your sorrows.’

‘Oh, Vivian! almost within this hour, and in this park, there has happened that—which——’ and here her voice died, and she looked fearfully round her.

‘Nay, fear not, fear not; no one can harm you here, no one shall harm you. Rest, rest upon me, and tell me all thy grief.’

‘I dare not—I cannot tell you.’

‘Nay, my own love, thou shalt.’

‘I cannot speak, your eye scares me. Are you mocking me? I cannot speak if you look so at me.’

‘I will not look on you; I will play with your long hair, and gaze on yonder star.—Now, speak on, my own love.’

‘Oh! Vivian, there is a custom in my native land—the world calls it an unhallowed one; you, in your proud spirit, will call it a vain one. But you would not deem it vain, if you were the woman now resting on your bosom. At certain hours of particular nights, and with peculiar ceremonies, which I need not here mention—we do believe, that in a lake or other standing water, fate reveals itself to the solitary votary. Oh! Vivian, I have been too long a searcher after this fearful science; and this very night, agitated in spirit, I sought yon water. The wind was in the right direction, and everything concurred in favouring a propitious divination. I knelt down to gaze on the lake. I had always been accustomed to view my own figure performing some future action, or engaged in some future scene of my life. I gazed, but I saw nothing but a brilliant star. I looked up into the heavens, but the star was not there, and the clouds were driving quick across the sky. More than usually agitated by this singular occurrence, I gazed once more; and just at the moment, when with breathless and fearful expectation, I waited the revelation of my immediate destiny, there flitted a figure across the water. It was there only for the breathing of a second, and as it passed, it mocked me.’ Here Mrs. Lorraine writhed in Vivian’s arms; her features were moulded in the same unnatural expression as when he first entered the gallery, and the hideous grin was again sculptured on her countenance. Her whole frame was in such a state of agitation, that she rose up and down in Vivian’s arms; and it was only with the exertion of his whole strength, that he could retain her.

‘Why, Amalia—this—this was nothing—your own figure.’

‘No, not my own—it was *yours*!’

Uttering a loud and piercing shriek, which echoed through the winding gallery, she fainted.

Vivian gazed on her in a state of momentary stupefaction, for the extraordinary scene had begun to influence his own nerves. And now he heard the tread of distant feet, and a light shone through the key-hole of the nearest door. The fearful shriek had alarmed some of the household. What was to be done? In desperation Vivian caught the lady up in his arms, and dashing out of an opposite door bore her to her chamber.

CHAPTER VII

SOUTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY

WHAT is this chapter to be about? Come, I am inclined to be courteous! You shall choose the subject of it. What shall it be—sentiment or scandal? a love scene, or a lay-sermon—or a lecture on omelettes soufflées? I am sick of the world! Do not be frightened, sweet reader! and Pearson, bring me a bottle of soda-water! I am sick of the world, and actually am now hesitating whether I shall turn misanthrope, or go to the Ancient Music. Not that you are to imagine that I am a dissatisfied, disappointed, moody monster, who lectures the stars, and fancies himself Rousseau secundus—not in the least. I am naturally a very amiable individual; but the truth is, I have been suffering the last three weeks under a tremendous attack of bile, and if I chance to touch a quill in this miserable state, why unfortunately, I have the habit of discharging a little of that ever-to-be abhorred juice. This, therefore, must be my excuse for occasionally appearing to be a little peevish. Far from disliking the world, I am always ready to do its merits the most poetical justice. Oh! thou beautiful world! thou art a

very pleasant thing—to those who know thee not. Pah ! I cannot get on : and now, on looking in the glass again, I do find myself a little yellow under the eyes still, a twitch in the left temple, tongue like snow in a fog, a violent nausea, pulse at one hundred and ten, yet with the appetite of a Bonassus. Another fit of the bile, by all that is sacred !—Oh ! thou vile world ! now for a libel !

When Vivian awoke in the morning, he found a note upon his pillow.

‘Did you hear the horrid shriek last night ? It must have disturbed every one. I think it must have been one of the South American birds, which Captain Tropic gave the Marchioness. Do not they sometimes favour the world with these nocturnal shriekings ? Is not there a passage in Spix apropos to this ? A——’

‘Did you hear the shriek last night, Mr. Grey ?’ asked the Marchioness, as Vivian entered the breakfast-room.

‘Oh yes ! Mr. Grey, did you hear the shriek ?’ asked Miss Graves.

‘Who did not ?’

‘Oh ! what could it be ?’ said the Marchioness.

‘Oh ! what could it be ?’ said Miss Graves.

‘Oh ! what should it be—a cat in a gutter, or a sick cow, or a toad dying to be devoured, Miss Graves.’

Always snub toadies, and led captains. It is only your greenhorns who endeavour to make their way by fawning and cringing to every member of the establishment. It is a miserable mistake. No one likes his dependants to be treated with respect, for such treatment affords an unpleasant contrast to his own conduct. Besides, it makes the toady’s blood unruly. There are three persons, mind you, to be attended to :—my lord, or my lady, as the case may be (usually the latter), the pet daughter, and the pet dog. I throw out these hints

en passant, for my principal objects in writing this work are to amuse myself, and to instruct society. In some future book, probably the twentieth or twenty-fifth, when the plot begins to wear threadbare, and we can afford a digression, I may give a Chapter on Domestic Tactics.

‘My dear Marchioness,’ continued Vivian, ‘see there—I have kept my promise—there is your bracelet. How is Julie to-day?’

‘Oh! Julie, poor dear, I hope she is better.’

‘Oh! yes, poor Julie! I think she is better.’

‘I do not know that, Miss Graves,’ said her Ladyship, somewhat tartly, not at all approving of a toady *thinking*. ‘I am afraid that scream last night must have disturbed her. Oh dear! Mr. Grey, I am afraid she will be ill again.’

Miss Graves looked mournful, and lifted up her eyes, and hands to Heaven, but did not dare to speak this time.

‘I thought she looked a little heavy about the eyes this morning,’ said the Marchioness, apparently very agitated; ‘and I have heard from Eglamour this post; he is not well too—I think everybody is ill now—he has caught a fever going to see the ruins of Pæstum; I wonder why people go to see ruins!’

‘I wonder indeed,’ said Miss Graves; ‘I never could see anything in a ruin.’

‘Oh dear Grey!’ continued the Marchioness, ‘I really am afraid Julie is going to be very ill.’

‘Oh! let Miss Graves pull her tail, and give her a little mustard seed; she will be better to-morrow.’

‘Well, Graves, mind you do what Mr. Grey tells you.’

‘Oh! y-e-s, my Lady!’

‘Mrs. Felix Lorraine,’ said the Marchioness, as that lady entered the room, ‘you are late to-day; I always reckon upon you as a supporter of an early breakfast at Désir.’

'Oh! I have been half round the park.'

'Did you hear the scream, Mrs. Felix?'

'Do you know what it *was*, Marchioness?'

'No—do you?'

'Ay! ay! see the reward of early rising, and a walk before breakfast. It was one of your new American birds, and it has half torn down your aviary.'

'One of the new Americans! Oh, the naughty thing! and has it broke the new fancy wirework?'

Here a little odd-looking, snuffy old man, with a brown scratch wig, who had been very busily employed the whole of breakfast-time with a cold game pie, the bones of which Vivian observed him most scientifically pick and polish, laid down his knife and fork, and addressed the Marchioness with an air of great interest.

'Pray, will your Ladyship have the goodness to inform me what bird this is?'

The Marchioness looked astounded at any one presuming to ask her a question; and then she drawled, 'Vivian, you know everything—tell this gentleman what a bird is.'

Now this gentleman was Mr. Mackaw, the most celebrated ornithologist extant, and who had written a treatise on Brazilian parroquets, in three volumes folio. He had arrived late at the Château the preceding night, and, although he had the honour of presenting his letter of introduction to the Marquess, this morning was the first time he had been seen by any of the party present, who were of course profoundly ignorant of his character.

'Oh! we were talking of some South American bird given to the Marchioness by the famous Captain Tropic; you know him perhaps, Bolivar's brother-in-law, or aid-de-camp, or something of that kind;—and which screams so dreadfully at night, that the whole family is disturbed. The Chowchowntow it is called—is not it, Mrs. Lorraine?'

'The Chowchowntow!' said Mr. Mackaw; 'I don't know it by that name.'

'Oh! do not you? I daresay we shall find an account

of it in Spix ; however,' said Vivian, rising, and taking a volume from the book-case ; 'ay ! here it is—I will read it to you.

'The Chowchowntow is about five feet seven inches in length, from the point of the bill, to the extremity of the claws. Its plumage is of a dingy, yellowish white : its form is elegant, and in its movements, and action, a certain pleasing and graceful dignity is observable ; but its head is by no means worthy of the rest of its frame ; and the expression of its eye is indicative of the cunning, and treachery, of its character. The habits of this bird are peculiar : occasionally most easily domesticated, it is apparently sensible of the slightest kindness ; but its regard cannot be depended upon, and for the slightest inducement, or with the least irritation, it will fly at its feeder. At other times, it seeks the most perfect solitude, and can only be captured with the greatest skill and perseverance. It generally feeds three times a day, but its appetite is not rapacious : it sleeps little ; is usually on the wing at sunrise, and proves that it slumbers but little in the night by its nocturnal and thrilling shrieks.'

'What an extraordinary bird ! Is that the bird you meant, Mrs. Felix Lorraine ?'

Mr. Mackaw was extremely restless the whole time that Vivian was reading this interesting extract. At last, he burst forth with an immense deal of science, and a great want of construction—a want which scientific men often experience, always excepting those mealy-mouthed professors who lecture 'at the Royal,' and get patronised by the blues—the Lavoisiers of May Fair !

'Chowchowntow, my Lady !—five feet seven inches high ! Brazilian bird ! When I just remind your Ladyship, that the height of the tallest bird to be found in Brazil,—and in mentioning this fact, I mention nothing hypothetical,—the tallest bird does not stand higher than four feet nine. Chowchowntow ! Dr. Spix is a name—accurate traveller—don't remember the passage—most

singular bird ! Chowchowntow ! don't know it by that name. Perhaps your Ladyship is not aware—I think you called that gentleman Mr. Grey—perhaps Mr. Grey is not aware, that I am Mr. Mackaw—I arrived late here last night—whose work in three volumes folio, on Brazilian Parroquets—although I had the honour of seeing his Lordship—is, I trust, a sufficient evidence that I am not speaking at random on this subject ; and consequently, from the lateness of the hour, could not have the honour of being introduced to your Ladyship.'

'Mr. Mackaw !' thought Vivian. 'The deuce you are ! Oh ! why did not I say a Columbian cassowary, or a Peruvian penguin, or a Chilian condor, or a Guatemalan goose, or a Mexican mastard—anything but Brazilian. Oh ! unfortunate Vivian Grey !'

The Marchioness, who was quite overcome with this scientific appeal, raised her large, beautiful, sleepy eyes, from a delicious compound of French roll and new milk, which she was working up in a Sèvres saucer for Julie ; and then, as usual, looked to Vivian for assistance.

'Grey, dear ! You know everything. Tell Mr. Mackaw about a bird.'

'Is there any point on which you differ from Spix in his account of the Chowchowntow, Mr. Mackaw ?'

'My dear sir, I don't follow him at all. Dr. Spix is a most excellent man ; a most accurate traveller—quite a name—but to be sure, I've only read his work in our own tongue ; and I fear from the passage you have just quoted—five feet seven inches high ! in Brazil ! It must be a most imperfect version. I say, that four feet nine is the greatest height I know. I don't speak without some foundation for my statement. The only bird I know above that height is the Paraguay cassowary ; which, to be sure, is sometimes found in Brazil. But the description of your bird, Mr. Grey, does not answer that at all. I ought to know. I do not speak at random. The only living specimen of that extraordinary bird, the Paraguay cassowary, in this country, is in my possession. It was

sent me by Bonpland ; and was given to him by the dictator of Paraguay himself. I call it, in compliment, *Doctor Francia*. I arrived here so late last night—only saw his Lordship—or I would have had it on the lawn this morning.’

‘Oh ! then, Mr. Mackaw,’ said Vivian, ‘that was the bird which screamed last night !’

‘Oh, yes ! Oh, yes ! Mr. Mackaw,’ said Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

‘Marchioness ! Marchioness !’ continued Vivian, ‘it is found out. It is Mr. Mackaw’s particular friend, his family physician, whom he always travels with, that awoke us all last night.’

‘Is he a foreigner ?’ asked the Marchioness, looking up.

‘My dear Mr. Grey, impossible ! the Doctor never screams.’

‘Oh ! Mr. Mackaw, Mr. Mackaw !’ said Vivian.

‘Oh ! Mr. Mackaw, Mr. Mackaw !’ said Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

‘I tell you he never screams,’ reiterated the man or science, ‘I tell you he can’t scream, he’s *muzzled*.’

‘Oh ! then, it must have been the Chowchowntow.’

‘Yes ; I think it must have been the Chowchowntow.’

‘I should very much like to hear Spix’s description again,’ said Mr. Mackaw, ‘only I fear it is troubling you too much, Mr. Grey.’

‘Read it yourself, my dear Sir,’ said Vivian, putting the book into his hand, which was the third volume of Tremaine.

Mr. Mackaw looked at the volume, and turned it over, and sideways, and upside downwards : the brain of a man who has written three folios on parroquets is soon puzzled. At first, he thought the book was a novel ; but then, an essay on pre-destination, under the title of *Memoirs of a Man of Refinement*, rather puzzled him ; then he mistook it for an Oxford reprint of Pearson on the Creed ; and then he stumbled on rather a warm scene in an old Château in the South of France.

Before Mr. Mackaw could gain the power of speech, the door opened, and entered—who?—Doctor Francia.

Mr. Mackaw's travelling companion possessed the awkward accomplishment of opening doors, and now strutted in, in quest of his beloved master. Affection for Mr. Mackaw was not, however, the only cause which induced this entrée.

The household of Château Désir, unused to cassowarys, had neglected to supply Dr. Francia with his usual breakfast, which consisted of half a dozen pounds of rump steaks, a couple of bars of hard iron, some pig lead, and brown stout. The consequence was, the dictator was sadly famished.

All the ladies screamed ; and then Mrs. Felix Lorraine admired the Doctor's violet neck, and the Marchioness looked with an anxious eye on Julie, and Miss Graves, as in duty bound, with an anxious eye on the Marchioness.

There stood the Doctor, quite still, with his large yellow eye fixed on Mr. Mackaw. At length, he perceived the cold pasty, and his little black wings began to flutter on the surface of his immense body.

'Che, che, che, che !' said the ornithologist, who did not like the symptoms at all : 'Che, che, che, che, —don't be frightened, ladies ! you see he's muzzled—che, che, che, che,—now, my dear doctor, now, now, now, Franky, Franky, Franky, now go away, go away, that's a dear doctor—che, che, che, che !'

But the large yellow eye grew more flaming and fiery, and the little black wings grew larger, and larger ; and now the left leg was dashed to and fro, with a fearful agitation. Mackaw looked agonised.—Pop !—what a whirr !—Francia is on the table !—All shriek, the chairs tumble over the ottomans—the Sévres china is in a thousand pieces—the muzzle is torn off and thrown at Miss Graves ; Mackaw's wig is dashed in the clotted cream, and devoured on the spot ; and the contents of the boiling urn are poured over the beauteous, and beloved Julie !

CHAPTER VIII

THE VIVIAN PAPERS

MR. COLBURN insists, that this is the only title, under which I can possibly publish the letters, which Vivian Grey received on the — day of —, 18—. I love to be particular in dates.

The Honourable Miss Cynthia Courtown, to Vivian Grey Esq.

Alburies, Oct. 18—.

‘DEAR GREY,

‘We have now been at Alburies for a fortnight. Nothing can be more delightful. Here is everybody in the world that I wish to see, except yourself. The Knightons, with as many outriders as usual:—Lady Julia and myself are great allies; I like her amazingly. The Marquess of Grandgoût arrived here last week, with a most delicious party; all the men who write John Bull. I was rather disappointed at the first sight of Stanislaus Hoax. I had expected, I do not know why, something juvenile, and squibbish—when lo! I was introduced to a corpulent individual, with his coat buttoned up to his chin, looking dull, gentlemanly, and apoplectic. However, on acquaintance, he came out quite rich—sings delightfully, and improvises like a prophet—ten thousand times more entertaining than Pistrucci. We are sworn friends; and I know all the secret history of John Bull. There is not much, to be sure, that you did not tell me yourself, but still there are *some things*. I must not trust them, however, to paper, and therefore pray dash down to Alburies immediately; I shall be most happy to introduce you to Lord Devildrain. There *was* an interview. What think you of that? Stanislaus told me all, *circumstantially*, and *after dinner*

—I do not doubt that it is quite true. What would you give for the secret history of the “rather yellow, rather yellow,” chanson. I dare not tell it you. It came from a quarter that will quite astound you, and in a very elegant, small, female hand. You remember Lambton did stir very awkwardly in the Lisbon business. Stanislaus wrote all the songs that appeared in the first number, except that ; but he never wrote a single line of prose for the first three months : it all came from Vivida Vis.

‘I like the Marquess of Grandgoût so much ! I hope he will be elevated in the peerage :—he looks as, if he wanted it so ! Poor dear man !

‘Oh ! do you know I have discovered a liaison between Bull and Blackwood. I am to be in the next Noctes ; I forget the words of the chorus exactly, but *Courtown* is to rhyme with *port down*, or something of that kind, and then they are to dash their glasses over their heads, give three cheers, and adjourn to whiskey-toddy, and the Chaldee chamber. How delightful !

‘The Prima Donnas are at Cheltenham, looking most respectable. Do you ever see the Age ? It is not proper for me to take it in. Pray send me down your numbers, and tell me all about it ; that’s a dear. Is it true that his Lordship paraphrases a little ?

‘I have not heard from Ernest Clay, which I think very odd. If you write to him, mention this, and tell him to send me word how Dormer Stanhope behaves at mess. I understand there has been a *mêlée*, not much—merely a *rouette* : do get it all out of him.

‘Colonel Delmington is at Cheltenham, with the most knowing beard you can possibly conceive ; Lady Julia rather patronises him. Lady Doubtful has been turned out of the rooms ; fifty challenges in consequence, and one duel ; missed fire, of course.

‘I have heard from Alhambra ; he has been wandering about in all directions. He has been to the Lakes, and is now at Edinburgh. He likes Southey. He gave the

laureate a quantity of hints for his next volume of the Peninsular War, but does not speak very warmly of Wordsworth: gentlemanly man, but only reads his own poetry. I made him promise to go and see De Quincy; and, like a good boy, he did; but he says he is a complete humbug. What can he mean? He stayed some days at Sir Walter's, and met Tom Moore. Singular, that our three great poets should be together this summer! He speaks in raptures of the great Baronet, and of the beauties of Abbotsford. He met Moore again in Edinburgh and was present at the interview between him and Hogg. Lalla Rookh did not much like being called "Tam Muir," and rather kicked at the shepherd.

'Edinburgh is more delightful than you can possibly conceive. I certainly intend to go next summer. Alhambra is very intimate with John Wilson, who seems indeed a first-rate fellow, full of fun and genius; and quite as brilliant a hand at a comic song, as at a tragic drama. Do you know it struck me the other day, that comic songs and tragedies are "the lights and shadows" of literature. Pretty idea, is it not?

'Here has been a cousin of yours about us; a young barrister going the circuit; by name, Hargrave Grey. The name attracted my notice, and due enquiries having been made, and satisfactorily answered, I patronised the limb of law. Fortunate for him! I got him to all the fancy balls and picnics that were going on. He was in heaven for a fortnight, and at length, having over-stayed his time, he left us, also leaving his bag and only brief behind him. They say he is ruined for life. Write soon.

'Yours ever,

'CYNTHIA COURTOWN.'

Ernest Clay, Esq., to Vivian Grey, Esq.

October —, 18—

'DEAR GREY!

'I am sick of key-bugles and country balls! All the girls in the town are in love with me—or my foraging

cap. I am very much obliged to you for your letter to Kennet, which procured everything I wanted. The family turned out *bored*, as you had prepared me. I never met such a clever family in my life; the father is summoning up courage to favour the world with a volume of sermons; both the sons have had sonnets refused by the London magazines; and Isabella Kennet most satisfactorily proved to me, after an argument of two hours, which for courtesy's sake, I fought very manfully, that Sir Walter Scott was not the author of *Waverley*; and then she vowed, as I have heard fifty young literary ladies vow before, that she had "seen the *Antiquary* in manuscript."

'There has been a slight row to diversify the monotony of our military life. Young Premium, the son of the celebrated loan-monger, has bought in; and Dormer Stanhope, and one or two others equally fresh, immediately anticipated another Battier business: but, with the greatest desire to make a fool of myself, I have a natural repugnance to mimicking the foolery of others: so with some little exertion, and very fortunately for young Premium, I got the tenth voted vulgar, on the score of curiosity, and we were civil to the man. As it turned out, it was all very well, for Premium is a quiet gentlemanly fellow enough, and exceedingly useful. He will keep extra grooms for the whole mess, if they want it. He is very grateful to me for what does not deserve any gratitude, and for what gave me no trouble; for I did not defend him from any feeling of kindness. And both the Mounteneys, and young Stapylton Toad, and Augustus, being in the regiment, why, I have very little trouble in commanding a majority, if it come to a division.

'I dined the other day at old Premium's, who lives near this town in a magnificent old hall; which, however, is not near splendid enough, for a man who is the creditor of every nation from California, to China; and, consequently, the great Mr. Stucco is building a plaster castl

for him in another part of the park. Glad am I enough, that I was prevailed upon to patronise the Premium ; for I think, I never witnessed a more singular scene than I did the day I dined there.

‘I was ushered through an actual street of servitors, whose liveries were really cloth of gold, and whose elaborately powdered heads would not have disgraced the most ancient mansion in St. James’s Square, into a large and very crowded saloon. I was, of course, received with the most miraculous consideration ; and the ear of Mrs. Premium seemed to dwell upon the jingling of my spurs, (for I am adjutant), as upon the most exquisite music. It was *bona fide* evidence of “the officers being there.” She’ll now be visited by the whole county.

‘Premium is a short, but by no means vulgar looking man, about fifty, with a high forehead covered with wrinkles, and with eyes deep sunk in his head. I never met a man of apparently less bustle, and of a cooler temperament. He was an object of observation from his very unobtrusiveness. There were, I immediately perceived, a great number of foreigners in the room. They looked much too knowing for Arguelles and Co., and I soon found that they were members of the different embassies, or missions of the various Governments, to whose infant existence Premium is foster-father. There were two very striking figures in Oriental costume, who were shown to me as the Greek Deputies—not that you are to imagine that they always appear in this picturesque dress. It was only as a particular favour, and to please Miss Premium ;—there, Grey, my boy ! there is a quarry !—that the illustrious envoys appeared, habited, this day in their national costume.

‘Oh ! Grey, you would have enjoyed the scene. In one part of the room was a naval officer, just hot from the mines of Mexico, and lecturing eloquently on the passing of the Cordillera. In another was a man of science, dilating on the miraculous powers of a newly-discovered amalgamation process, to a knot of merchants, who, with

bent brows and eager eyes, were already forming a Company for its adoption. Here floated the latest anecdote of Bolivar ; and there a murmur of some new movement of Cochrane's. And then the perpetual babble about "rising states," and "new loans," and "enlightened views," and "juncture of the two oceans," and "liberal principles," and "steam boats to Mexico"; and the earnest look which every one had in the room. Oh ! how different to the vacant gaze that we have been accustomed to ! I was really particularly struck by this circumstance. Every one at Premium's looked full of some great plan ; as if the fate of empires was on his very breath. I hardly knew whether they were most like conspirators, or gamblers, or the lions of a public dinner, conscious of an universal gaze, and consequently looking proportionately interesting. One circumstance particularly struck me : as I was watching the acute countenance of an individual, who, young Premium informed me, was the Chilian minister, and who was listening with great attention to a dissertation from Captain Tropic, the celebrated traveller, on the feasibility of a railroad over the Andes—I observed a very great sensation among all those around me ; every one shifting and shuffling, and staring, and assisting in that curious, and confusing, ceremony, called *making way*. Even Premium appeared a little excited, when he came forward with a smile on his face to receive an individual, apparently a foreigner, and who stepped on with great, though gracious dignity. Being very curious to know who this great man was, I found that this was an *ambassador*—the representative of a recognised state.

'Pon my honour, when I saw all this, I could not refrain from moralising on the magic of wealth ; and when I just remembered the embryo plot of some young Huzzar Officers to *cut* the son of the magician, I rather smiled ; but while I, with even greater reverence than all others, was making way for *his Excellency*, I observed Mrs.

Premium looking at my spurs—"Farewell Philosophy!" thought I, "Puppyism for ever!"

'Dinner was at last announced, and the nice etiquette which was observed between *recognised* states, and *non-recognised* states, was really excessively amusing: not only the ambassador would take precedence of the mere political agent, but his Excellency's private secretary was equally tenacious as to the agent's private secretary. At length we were all seated:—the spacious dining-room was hung round with portraits of most of the *successful* revolutionary leaders, and over Mr. Premium was suspended a magnificent portrait of Bolivar. Oh! Grey, if you could but have seen the plate! By Jove! I have eaten off the silver of most of the first families in England, yet, never in my life, did it enter into my imagination, that it was possible for the most ingenious artist that ever existed, to repeat a crest half so often in a table-spoon, as in that of Premium. The crest is a bubble, and really the effect produced by it is most ludicrous.

'I was very much struck at table, by the appearance of an individual who came in very late; but who was evidently, by his bearing, no insignificant personage. He was a tall man, with a long hooked nose, and high cheek bones, and with an eye—(were you ever at the Old Bailey? there you may see its fellow); his complexion looked as if it had been accustomed to the breezes of many climes, and his hair, which had once been red, was now silvered, or rather iron-greied, not by age. Yet there was in his whole bearing, in his slightest actions, even in the easy, desperate, air with which he took a glass of wine, an indefinable—something (you know what I mean), which attracted your unremitting attention to him. I was not wrong in my suspicions of his celebrity; for, as Miss Premium, whom I sat next to (eh! Grey, my boy, how are you? "'tis a very fine thing for a father-in-law," etc. etc.), whispered, "he was quite a lion." It was Lord Oceanville. What he is

after, no one knows. Some say he is going to Greece, others whisper an invasion of Paraguay, and others of course say other things; perhaps equally correct. I think he is for Greece. I know he is the most extraordinary man I ever met with. I am getting prosy. Good bye! Write soon. Any fun going on? How is Cynthia? I ought to have written. How is Mrs. Felix Lorraine? she is a d—d odd woman!

‘Yours faithfully,

‘ERNEST CLAY.’

Mr. Daniel Groves, to Vivian Grey, Esq.

‘SIR,

‘I have just seen Sir Hanway, who gave me a letter from you, requesting me to furnish you with my ideas on the state of the agricultural interest; and to think of John Conyers for the farm of Maresfield, now vacant.

‘With respect to the former, I can’t help thinking Ministers remarkable wrong on the point of the game laws particularly, to say nothing of the duty on felled timber, malt, and brown mustard. ’Tayn’t the greatness of the duty that makes the increase of the revenue. That’s my maxim.

‘As for Maresfield, I certainly had an eye to it for my second son, William; as my mistress says, he’s now getting fittish to look out for himself in the world;—and then there’s my nephew at Edgecombe, the son of my sister Mary, who married one of the Wrights at Upton, and I always promised old Mr. Wright to see Tom well done by. That’s the ground I stand upon. But, certainly, to oblige your honour, I can’t say but what I’ll think of it.

‘Sir Hanway says, Conyers told him that White-footed Moll died on Wednesday. She was, as your honour always said, a pretty creature. Talking of this, puts me in mind, that if your honour comes in for Mounteney, which they’re talking of in these parts, I

hope you'll say something about the tax on cart-horses. This is the ground I stand upon—if a gentleman keeps a horse for pleasure, it's only right Government should have the benefit; but when it's to promote the agricultural interest, my maxim is, it's remarkable wrong to tax 'em all promiscuous.

'As for Conyers, I can't help thinking his cottage might be removed: it stands in the midst of one of the finest pieces of corn-land in this country; and I said so the other day to Mr. Stapylton Toad, but he's not a man as'll take advice. That Maresfield Farm is a nice bit for game, as I believe your honour well knows. I took out Snowball, and Negro, the other morning, with young Fletcher of Upton—he's the third cousin of old Mrs. Wright's sister-in-law's niece—we coursed three hares, and killed one just opposite Gunter's on the hill, who's a bit of a relation again on my wife's side; so I just looked in and took a crust of bread and cheese, for civility costs nothing—that's my maxim.

'The new Beer bill is felt a grievance.—John Sandys says as my men won't be satisfied with less than ten strike to the hogshead; this is remarkable wrong. So you may make your mind easy about John Conyers: I've been talking to my mistress, and the upshot of it is, that I'll take my old horse and ride over to Stapylton Toad, and settle with him about the removal; and if I can give you any more information on this point, or anything else relating to our part of the world, or the corn-laws in general, I shall be very happy to remain

'Your honour's obedient servant,

'DANIEL GROVES.

'P.S. The half pipe of Port wine I told you of is come in, and I think it promises to be as good, sterling, stuff as ever you need wish to taste—some *body* in it—none of your French vinegary slipslop. Depend on't, Port's the wine for Englishmen—there's some stamina in it: that's the ground I stand upon.'

Hargrave Grey, Esq., to Vivian Grey, Esq.

October—, 18—.

‘DEAR VIVIAN,

‘You ought not to expect a letter from me. I cannot conceive why you do not occasionally answer your correspondent’s letters, if correspondents they may be called. It is really a most unreasonable habit of yours ; any one but myself would quarrel with you.

‘A letter from Baker met me at this place, and I find that the whole of that most disagreeable, and annoying, business is arranged. From the promptitude, skill, and energy, which are apparent in the whole affair, I suspect I have to thank the very gentleman, whom I was just going to quarrel with. You are a good fellow, Vivian, after all. For want of a brief, I sit down to give you a sketch of my adventures on this, my first, circuit.

‘This circuit is a cold, and mercantile adventure, and I am disappointed in it. Not so either, for I looked for but little to enjoy. Take one day of my life as a specimen ; the rest are mostly alike. The sheriff’s trumpets are playing,—one, some tune of which I know nothing, and the other no tune at all. I am obliged to turn out at eight. It is the first day of the Assize, so there is some chance of a brief, being a new place. I push my way into court through files of attorneys, as civil to the rogues as possible, assuring them there is plenty of room, though I am at the very moment gasping for breath, wedged in, in a lane of well-lined waistcoats. I get into court, take my place in the quietest corner, and there I sit, and pass other men’s fees and briefs like a twopenny postman, only without pay. Well ! ’tis six o’clock—dinner-time—at the bottom of the table—carve for all—speak to none—nobody speaks to me—must wait till last to sum up, and pay the bill. Reach home quite devoured by spleen, after having heard every one abused, who happened to be absent.

‘You wished me many briefs, but only one of your

wishes has come to pass, and that at this place ; but I flatter myself I got up the law of the case in a most masterly style ; and I am sure you will allow me to be capable of so doing, when I relate the particulars :

‘Indictment states, that prisoner on, etc., at, etc., from out of a certain larder, stole a pork pie.

‘2nd. count—a meat pie.

‘3rd. count—a pie in general.

‘The great question was, whether the offence was complete or not, the *felon* not having carried it out of the larder, but only conveyed it into his pocket :—that is, all he could not eat.

‘Plea :—he was hungry.

‘Per Bolter Baron.—“He must not satisfy his appetite at another person’s expense ; so let him be whipped, and discharged ; and let the treasurer of the county pay the expenses of this prosecution.” Which were accordingly allowed, to the amount of something under fifty pounds.

‘Do not turn up the whites of your eyes, Vivian ; and, in the fulness of your indignation, threaten us with all the horrors of parliamentary interference. The fact is ; on this circuit, to judge of the number of offences tried, such a theft is as enormous as a burglary, with one or two throats cut, in London ; for pork pies are the staple of the county ; and they export them by canal, to all parts of the world, whereto the canals run, which the natives imagine to be to parts beyond seas at least.

‘I travelled to this place with Manners, whom I believe you know, and amused myself by getting from him an account of my fellows, anticipating, at the same time, what in fact happened ;—to wit, that I should afterwards get his character from them. It is strange how freely they deal with each other—that is, the person spoken of being away. I would not have had you see our Stanhope for half a hundred pounds ; your jealousy would have been so excited. To say the truth, we are a little rough,—our mane wants pulling, and our hoofs

trimming, but we jog along without performing either operation: and, by dint of rattling the whip against the splash-board, using all one's persuasion of hand and voice, and jerking the bit in his mouth, we do contrive to get into the circuit town, usually, just about the time that the sheriff and his *posse comitatus* are starting to meet my Lord, the King's Justice:—and that is the worst of it; for their horses are prancing and pawing coursers just out of the stable,—sleek skins, and smart drivers. We begin to be knocked up just then, and our appearance is the least brilliant of any part of the day. Here I had to pass through a host of these powdered, scented fops; and the multitude who had assembled to gaze on the nobler exhibition, rather scoffed at our humble vehicle. As Manners had just then been set down to find the inn, and lodging, I could not jump out, and leave our equipage to its fate, so I settled my cravat, and seemed not to mind it—only I *did*.

‘Manners has just come in, and insists upon my going to the theatre with him. I shall keep this back another post, to tell you whether I receive another letter from Baker, at ——d.

19th.

‘No letter from Baker, but I find it so dull sitting in court with nothing to do, that I shall trouble you with a few more lines from myself. The performance last night was rather amusing: Romeo and Juliet turned into a melo-drame, to suit the taste of the vicinity. The nasal tones of Juliet's voice in the love scenes, must have been peculiarly moving to any Romeo; but to that for whom they were intended they seemed so much in earnest, that he must have been quite enraptured. There were no half meetings. Juliet entered fully into the feeling of the poet; and hung about his neck, and kissed his lips—all like life, to the great edification of the audience assembled; which, as it was assize week, was a very brilliant one. In such a company, there must necessarily be economy used in the actors and actresses.

Thus, as Mercutio is killed off in the first act, he afterwards performs the Friar, and the Friar himself figures as the chief dancer in the masquerade: but I was most charmed at discovering Juliet's nasal tones in her own dirge—a wonderful idea, never before introduced on any stage. I was led to make this discovery, not merely by the fact of her voice being undisguised, but from an unfortunate accident which occurred at the funeral. As the deceased heroine was a chief mourner, her beloved corpse had to be performed by a bundle of rags, or something of the kind, laid upon a sort of school form, and carried by herself and five other ladies in white:—so, as the music was rather quick, and the mourners had to perform *pas de zephyr* all round the stage, and Juliet did not keep very good time, while the virgins on one side were standing on their left legs towards the audience—as nearly in a horizontal posture as possible—the daughter of Capulet, and her battalion, began performing on the wrong leg, and in the consequent scuffle, the bier overturned! The accident, however, was speedily rectified, and the procession moved on to the music of two fiddles and one bell. Juliet's tomb was a snug little parlour with blue panels, and Romeo drank gin instead of poison, which Shakespeare must have surely intended, or else it was quite out of nature to make Juliet exclaim, "What, churl! not left one drop!"

'But I must leave off this nonsense, and attend to his Lordship's charge, which is now about to commence. I have not been able to get you a single good murder, although I have kept a sharp look out as you desired me; but there is a chance of a first-rate one at ——n.

'I am quite delighted with Mr. Justice St. Prose. He is at this moment in a most entertaining passion, preparatory to a "*conscientious*" summing up; and in order that his ideas may not be disturbed, he has very liberally ordered the door-keeper to have the door oiled immediately, *at his own expense*. Now for my Lord, the King's justice.

“Gentlemen of the Jury !”

“The noise is insufferable—the heat is intolerable—the door-keepers let the people keep shuffling in—the ducks in the corner are going quack, quack, quack—here’s a little girl being tried for her life, and the judge can’t hear a word that’s said. Bring me my black cap, and I’ll condemn her to death instantly.”

“You can’t, my Lord,” shrieks the infant sinner ; “it’s only for petty larceny !”

“This is agreeable, is it not ? but let us see what the next trial will produce :—this was an action of trespass, for breaking off the pump handle, knocking down the back kitchen door, spitting on the parlour carpet, and tumbling the maid’s head about.

“Plea.—That the defendants, eight in number, entered in aid of the constable, under warrant of a magistrate, to search for stolen goods.

“John Staff, examined by Mr. Shuffleton.

“Well, Mr. Constable, what have you to say about this affair ?”

“Why, Sir, I charged them men to assist me in the King’s name.”

“What, eight of you ? why, there was only an old woman, and a boy, and the servant girl in the house. You must have been terribly frightened at them, eh ?”

“Can’t say for that, Sir, only they was needful.”

“Why, what could you want so many for ?”

“Why, you see, Sir, I couldn’t read the warrant myself, so I charged Abraham Lockit to read it for me ; and when he came, he said as it was Squire Jobson’s writing, and so he could not ; and then I had occasion to charge Simon Lockit, and he read it.”

“Well, that’s only two : what were the rest for ?”

“Why, your honour, they was to keep the women quiet.”

“Mr. Justice St. Prose.—“Take care what you are about, witness. I consider it my duty to advise you not

to laugh ; it is, in my opinion, a contempt of court, and I therefore desire you to restrain yourself."

'Mr. Shuffleton.—"But you have not told me why you wanted these other six men?"

"Why, the women, d'ye see, Sir, was so very unruly in the kitchen ; and so I charged them to keep 'em quiet."

"Now, Sir, what do you call keeping the women quiet, pulling the maid's cap off, and——?"

'Mr. Justice St. Prose. (To a person opposite.)—"You will excuse me, Sir, but I think that those two little gentlemen had better leave the court, till this examination is over."

'His Lordship "thought it his duty" to give a similar warning to two very pretty young ladies in pink bonnets and green pelisses. They were, however, so obstinate as to remain in court, until they had heard the whole circumstantial, and improper, evidence, of the destruction of the maid's cap. When it was all over, his Lordship once more fixed his large eyes on the constable, and thus delivered himself:—

"Now, Mr. Constable, to remove the sting of any remark which may have dropped from me during this trial, I will allow that, very probably, you had reason to laugh."—Mr. Constable looked quite relieved.

'By way of variety, I will give you a specimen of his Lordship's style of cross-examination.

'Enter a witness with a flourishing pair of whiskers, approximating to a King Charles.

'Mr. Justice St. Prose.—"Pray, Sir, *who* are you?"

'Whiskered Witness.—"An architect, my Lord."

'Mr. J. St. Prose.—"An architect ! Sir ; are you not in the army?"

'W. W. (agitated.)—"No, my Lord."

'Mr. J. St. Prose.—"Never were?"

'W. W. (much browbeat.)—"No, my Lord."

'Mr. J. St. Prose.—"Then, Sir, what right have you to wear those whiskers? I consider that you cannot be

a respectable young man, and I shall not allow you your expenses."

'I have just got an invite from the Kearneys. Congratulate me.

'Dear Vivian, yours faithfully,

'HARGRAVE GREY.'

Lady Scrope to Vivian Grey, Esq.

Ormsby Park, Oct. —, 18—.

'MY DEAR VIVIAN,

'By desire of Sir Berdmore (is not this pretty and proper ?), I have to request the fulfilment of a promise, upon the hope of which being performed, I have existed through this dull month. Pray, my dear Vivian, come to us immediately. Ormsby has at present little to offer for your entertainment. We have had that unendurable bore, Vivacity Dull, with us for a whole fortnight. A report of the death of the Lord Chancellor, or a rumour of the production of a new tragedy, has carried him up to town ; but whether it be to ask for the seals, or to indite an ingenious prologue to a play which will be condemned the first night, I cannot inform you. I am quite sure he is capable of doing either. However, we shall have other deer in a few days.

'I believe you have never met the Mounteney—no, I am sure you have not. They have never been at Hallesbrooke, since you have been at Désir. They are coming to us immediately. I am sure you will like them very much. Lord Mounteney is one of those kind, easy-minded, accomplished men, who, after all, are nearly the pleasantest society one ever meets. Rather wild in his youth, but with his estate now unincumbered, and himself perfectly domestic. His lady is an unaffected, agreeable woman. But it is Caroline Mounteney whom I wish you particularly to meet. She is one of those delicious creatures who, in spite of not being married, are actually conversable. Spirited, without any affectation or

brusquerie ; beautiful, and knowing enough to be quite conscious of it ; perfectly accomplished, and yet never annoying you with tattle about Bochsà, and Ronzi de Begnis, and D'Egville.

‘We also expect the Delmonts, the most endurable of the Anglo-Italians that I know. Mrs. Delmont is not always dropping her handkerchief like Lady Gusto, as if she expected a miserable cavalier serventé to be constantly upon his knees ; or giving those odious expressive looks, which quite destroy my nerves whenever I am under the same roof as that horrible Lady Soprano. There is a little too much talk, to be sure, about Roman churches, and newly-discovered Mosaics, and Abbate Maii, but still we cannot expect perfection. There are reports going about that Ernest Clay is either ruined, going to be married, or about to write a novel. Perhaps all are true. Young Premium has nearly lost his character, by driving a square-built, striped green thing, drawn by one horse. Ernest Clay got him through this terrible affair. What can be the reasons of the Sieur Ernest’s excessive amiability ?

‘Both the young Mounteneys are with their regiment, but Aubrey Vere is coming to us, and I have half a promise from —— ; but I know you never speak to unmarried men, so why do I mention them ? Let me, I beseech you, my dear Vivian, have a few days of you to myself, before Ormsby is full, and before you are introduced to Caroline Mounteney. I did not think it was possible that I could exist so long without seeing you : but you really must not try me too much, or I shall quarrel with you. I have received all your letters, which are very, very agreeable ; but I think rather, rather impudent. If you don’t behave better, I shan’t pet you—I shan’t indeed ; so do not put off coming a single moment. Adieu !

‘HARRIETTE SCROPE.’

Horace Grey, Esq., to Vivian Grey, Esq.

Paris, Oct. 18—.

‘MY DEAR VIVIAN,

‘I have received yours of the 9th, and have read it with mixed feelings of astonishment, and sorrow.

‘You are now, my dear son, a member of what is called, *le grand monde*—society formed on anti-social principles. Apparently you have possessed yourself of the object of your wishes ; but the scenes you live in are very movable ; the characters you associate with are all masked ; and it will always be doubtful, whether you can retain that long, which has been obtained by some slippery artifice. Vivian, you are a juggler ; and the deceptions of your sleight-of-hand tricks depend upon instantaneous motions.

‘When the selfish combine with the selfish, bethink you how many projects are doomed to disappointment ! how many cross interests baffle the parties, at the same time joined together without ever uniting. What a mockery is their love ! but how deadly are their hatreds ! All this great society, with whom so young an adventurer has trafficked, abate nothing of their price in the slavery of their service, and the sacrifice of violated feelings. What sleepless nights has it cost you to win over the disobliged, to conciliate the discontented, to cajole the contumacious ! You may smile at the hollow flatteries, answering to flatteries as hollow, which, like bubbles when they touch, dissolve into nothing : but tell me, Vivian, what has the self-tormentor felt at the laughing treacheries, which force a man down into self-contempt ?

‘Is it not obvious, my dear Vivian, that true Fame, and true Happiness, must rest upon the imperishable social affections ? I do not mean that coterie celebrity, which paltry minds accept as fame ; but that which exists independent of the opinions, or the intrigues of individuals : nor do I mean that glittering show of perpetual converse with the world, which some miserable wanderers call

Happiness ; but that which can only be drawn from the sacred and solitary fountain of your own feelings.

‘Active as you have now become in the great scenes of human affairs, I would not have you be guided by any fanciful theories of morals, or of human nature. Philosophers have amused themselves by deciding on human actions by systems ; but, as these systems are of the most opposite natures, it is evident that each philosopher, in reflecting his own feelings in the system he has so elaborately formed, has only painted his own character.

‘Do not, therefore, conclude with Hobbes and Mandeville, that man lives in a state of civil warfare with man ; nor with Shaftesbury, adorn with a poetical philosophy our natural feelings. Man is neither the vile, nor the excellent being, which he sometimes imagines himself to be. He does not so much act by system, as by sympathy. If this creature cannot always feel for others, he is doomed to feel for himself ; and the vicious are, at least, blessed with the curse of remorse.

‘You are now inspecting one of the worst portions of society, in what is called the great world (St. Giles’ is bad, but of another kind) ; and it may be useful, on the principle, that the actual sight of brutal ebriety was supposed to have inspired youth with the virtue of temperance ; on the same principle, that the Platonist, in the study of deformity, conceived the beautiful. Let me warn you not to fall into the usual error of youth in fancying that the circle you move in is precisely the world itself. Do not imagine that there are not other beings, whose benevolent principle is governed by finer sympathies ; by more generous passions ; and by those nobler emotions, which really constitute all our public and private virtues. I give you this hint, lest, in your present society, you might suppose these virtues were merely historical.

‘Once more, I must beseech you, not to give loose to any elation of mind. The machinery by which you have

attained this unnatural result, must be so complicated, that in the very tenth hour, you will find yourself stopped in some part where you never counted on an impediment ; and the want of a slight screw, or a little oil, will prevent you from accomplishing your magnificent end.

‘We are, and have been, very dull here. There is every probability of Madame de Genlis writing more volumes than ever. I called on the old lady, and was quite amused with the enthusiasm of her imbecility. Chateaubriand is getting what you call *a bore* ; and the whole city is mad about a new opera by Boieldieu. Your mother sends her love, and desires me to say, that the *salmi* of woodcocks, *à la Lucullus*, which you write about, does not differ from the practice here in vogue ; but we have been much pleased with ducks, with olive sauce, about which she particularly wishes to consult you. How does your cousin Hargrave prosper on his circuit ? The Delmingtons are here, which makes it very pleasant for your mother, as well as for myself ; for it allows me to hunt over the old bookshops at my leisure. There are no new books worth sending you, or they would accompany this ; but I would recommend you to get Meyer’s new volume from Treuttel and Wurtz, and continue to make notes as you read it. Give my compliments to the Marquess, and believe me

‘Your most affectionate father,

‘HORACE GREY.’

CHAPTER IX

THE DEPARTURE

IT was impossible for any human being to behave with more kindness than the Marquess of Carabas did to Vivian Grey, after that young gentleman’s short conversation with Mrs. Felix Lorraine, in the conservatory. The only feeling which seemed to actuate

the peer, was an eager desire to compensate, by his present conduct, for any past misunderstanding, and he loaded his young friend with all possible favour. Still Vivian was about to quit Château Désir ; and in spite of all that had passed, he was extremely loth to leave his noble friend under the guardianship of his female one.

About this time, the Duke and Duchess of Juggernaut, the very pink of aristocracy, the wealthiest, the proudest, the most ancient, and most pompous couple in Christendom, honoured Château Désir with their presence for two days ; *only two days*, making the Marquess's mansion a convenient resting-place in one of their princely progresses, to one of their princely castles.

Vivian contrived to gain the heart of her Grace, by his minute acquaintance with the Juggernaut pedigree ; and having taken the opportunity, in one of their conversations, to describe Mrs. Felix Lorraine as the most perfect specimen of divine creation with which he was acquainted, at the same time the most amusing, and the most amiable of women, that lady was honoured with an invitation to accompany her Grace to HIMALAYA CASTLE. As this was the greatest of all possible honours, and as Désir was now very dull, Mrs. Felix Lorraine accepted the invitation, or rather, obeyed the command ; for the Marquess would not hear of a refusal, Vivian having dilated in the most energetic terms, on the opening which now presented itself of gaining the Juggernaut. The coast being thus cleared, Vivian set off the next day for Sir Berdmore Scrope's.

BOOK THE FOURTH

CHAPTER I

THE PARKS

THE important time grew nigh. Christmas was to be passed by the Carabas family, the Beaconsfields, the Scropes, and the Cleveland, at Lord Courtown's villa at Richmond; at which place, on account of its vicinity to the Metropolis, the Viscount had determined *to make out* the holidays; notwithstanding the Thames entered his kitchen windows, and the Donna del Lago was acted in the theatre with real water,—Cynthia Courtown performing Elena, paddling in a punt.

‘Let us order our horses, Cleveland, round to the Piccadilly gate, and walk through the Guards. I must stretch my legs. That bore, Horace Buttonhole, captured me in Pall-Mall East, and has kept me in the same position for upwards of half an hour. I shall make a note to blackball him at the Athenæum. How is Mrs. Cleveland?’

‘Extremely well. She goes down to Buckhurst Lodge with the Marchioness. Is not that Lord Lowersdale?’

‘His very self. He is going to call on Vivida Vis, I have no doubt. Lowersdale is a man of very considerable talent—much more than the world gives him credit for.’

‘And he doubtless finds a very able counsellor in Monsieur le Secrétaire?’

‘Can you name a better one?’

‘You rather patronise Vivida, I think, Grey?’

‘Patronise him! he is my political pet!’

‘And yet Kerrison tells me, you reviewed the Suffolk Papers in the Edinburgh.’

‘So I did—what of that? I defended them in Blackwood.’

‘This, then, is the usual method of you literary gentlemen. Thank God! I never could write a line.’

‘York House rises proudly—if York House be its name.’

‘This confounded Catholic Question is likely to give us a great deal of trouble, Grey. It is perfect madness for us to advocate the cause of the “six millions of hereditary bondsmen”; and yet, with not only the Marchese, but even Courtown and Beaconsfield committed, it is, to say the least, a very delicate business.’

‘Very delicate, certainly; but there are *some* precedents, I shrewdly suspect, Cleveland, for the influence of a party being opposed to measures, which the heads of that party had pledged themselves to adopt.’

‘Does old Gifford still live at Pimlico, Grey?’

‘Still.’

‘He is a splendid fellow, after all.’

‘Certainly, a mind of great powers—but bigoted.’

‘Oh! yes—I know exactly what you are going to say. It is the fashion, I am aware, to abuse the old gentleman. He is the Earl of Eldon of literature:—not the less loved, because a little vilified. But, when I just remember what Gifford has done—when I call to mind the perfect and triumphant success of everything he has undertaken—the Anti-Jacobin—the Baviad and Mæviad—the Quarterly—all palpable hits—on the very jugular—upon my honour, I hesitate before I speak of William Gifford in any other terms, or in any other spirit, than those of admiration and of gratitude.’

‘And to think, Grey, that the Tory administration, and the Tory party of Great Britain, should never, by a single act, or in one single instance, have indicated, that

they were in the least aware, that the exertions of such a man differed in the slightest degree from those of Hunt and Hone!—Oh! Grey, of all the delusions which flourish in this mad world, the delusion of that man is the most frantic, who voluntarily, and of his own accord, supports the interest of a party. I mention this to you, because it is the rock on which all young politicians strike. Fortunately, you enter life under different circumstances from those which usually attend most political debutants. You have your connections formed, and your views ascertained. But if, by any chance, you find yourself independent and unconnected, never, for a moment, suppose that you can accomplish your objects by coming forward, unsolicited, to fight the battle of a party. They will cheer your successful exertions, and then smile at your youthful zeal—or, crossing themselves for the unexpected succour, be too cowardly to reward their unexpected champion. No, Grey; make them *fear* you,—and they will kiss your feet. There is no act of treachery, or meanness, of which a political party is not capable;—for in politics there is no honour.

‘As to Gifford, I am surprised at their conduct towards him,—although I know better than most men, of what wood a minister is made, and how much reliance may be placed upon the gratitude of a party: but Canning—from Canning I certainly did expect different conduct.’

‘Oh, Canning! I love the man: but, as you say, Cleveland, ministers have short memories, and Canning’s—that was Antilles that just passed us; apropos to whom, I quite rejoice that the Marquess has determined to take such a decided course on the West India Question.’

‘Oh, yes! curse your East India sugar.’

‘To be sure—slavery, and sweetmeats, for ever!’

‘I was always for the West India interest, from a boy, Grey. I had an aunt who was a Creole, and who used to stuff me with guava jelly, and small delicate

limes, that looked, for all the world, like emeralds powdered with diamond dust.'

'Pooh! my dear Cleveland, they should not have looked like any such thing. What your Creole aunt gave you must have been *candied*. The delicate fruit should swim in an ocean of clarified sugar.'

'I believe you are right, Grey: I sacrificed truth to a trope. Do you like the Barbados ginger?'

'If it be mild, and of a pale golden colour. How delicious the Bourdeaux flows after it! Oh! the West India interest for ever!'

'But, aside with joking, Grey, I really think, that if any man of average ability dare rise in the House, and rescue many of the great questions of the day from what Dugald Stuart, or D'Israeli, would call the spirit of *Political Religionism*, with which they are studiously mixed up, he would not fail to make a great impression upon the House, and a still greater one upon the country.'

'I quite agree with you; and certainly I should recommend commencing with the West India Question. Singular state of affairs! when even Canning can only insinuate his opinion, when the very existence of some of our most valuable colonies is at stake, and when even his insinuations are only indulged with an audience, on the condition that he favours the House with an introductory discourse of twenty minutes on "the divine Author of our faith"—and an eulogium of equal length on the *esprit du Christianisme*, in a style worthy of Chateaubriand.'

'Miserable work, indeed! I have got a pamphlet on the West India Question sent me this morning. Do you know any raving lawyer, any mad Master in Chancery, or something of the kind, who meddles in these affairs?'

'Oh! Stephen! a puddle in a storm! He is for a crusade for the regeneration of the Antilles—the most forcible of feeblers—the most energetic of drivellers,—Velluti acting Pietro L'Eremita.'

‘Do you know, by any chance, whether Southey’s *Vindiciæ* is out yet? I wanted to look it over during the holidays.’

‘Not out—though it has been advertised some time: but what do you expect?’

‘Nay, it is an interesting controversy, as controversies go. Not exactly Milton, and Salmasius—but fair enough.’

‘Oh! I do not know. It has long degenerated into a mere personal bickering between the Laureate and Butler. Southey is, of course, revelling in the idea of writing an English work with a Latin title; and that, perhaps, is the only circumstance for which the controversy is prolonged.’

‘But Southey, after all, is a man of splendid talents.’

‘Doubtless—the most philosophical of bigots, and the most poetical of prose writers.’

‘Apropos to the Catholic Question—there goes Colonial Bother’em, trying to look like Prince Metternich;—a decided failure.’

‘What can keep him in town?’

‘Writing letters, I suppose. Heaven preserve me from receiving any of them!’

‘Is it true, then, that his letters are of the awful length that is whispered?’

‘True! Oh! they are something beyond all conception! Perfect epistolary Boa Constrictors. I speak with feeling, for I have myself suffered under their voluminous windings.’

‘Have you seen his quarto volume—“The Cure for the Catholic Question?”’

‘Yes.’

‘If you have it, lend it to me. What kind of thing is it?’

‘Oh! what should it be!—ingenious, and imbecile. He advises the Catholics, in the old nursery language, to behave like good boys—to open their mouths, and shut their eyes, and see what God will send them.’

‘Well, that is the usual advice. Is there nothing more characteristic of the writer?’

‘What think you of a proposition of making Jocky of Norfolk Patriarch of England, and of an ascertained *credo* for our Catholic fellow-subjects? Ingenious—is not it?’

‘Have you seen Puff’s new volume of Ariosto?’

‘I have. What could possibly have induced Mr. Partenopex Puff to have undertaken such a duty? Mr. Puff is a man destitute of poetical powers; possessing no vigour of language, and gifted with no happiness of expression. His translation is hard, dry, and husky, as the outside of cocoa-nut. I am amused to see the excellent tact with which the public has determined not to read his volumes, in spite of the incessant exertions of a certain set to ensure their popularity; but the time has gone by, when the smug coterie could create a reputation.’

‘Do you think the time ever existed, Cleveland?’

‘What could have seduced Puff into being so ambitious? I suppose his admirable knowledge of Italian; as if a man were entitled to strike a die for the new sovereign, merely because he was aware how much alloy might legally debase its carats of pure gold.’

‘I can never pardon Puff for that little book on Cats. The idea was admirable; but, instead of one of the most delightful volumes that ever appeared, to take up a dull, tame, compilation from Bingley’s Animal Biography!’

‘Yes! and the impertinence of dedicating such a work to the Officers of His Majesty’s Household Troops! Considering the quarter from whence it proceeded, I certainly did not expect much, but still I thought that there was to be some little esprit. The poor Guards! how nervous they must have been at the announcement! What could have been the point of that dedication?’

‘I remember a most interminable proser, who was blessed with a very sensible-sounding voice, and who, on the strength of that, and his correct and constant

emphases, was considered by the world, for a great time, as a sage. At length it was discovered that he was quite the reverse. Mr. Puff's wit is very like this man's wisdom. You take up one of his little books, and you fancy, from its title-page, that it is going to be very witty; as you proceed, you begin to suspect that the man is only a wag, and then, surprised at not "seeing the point," you have a shrewd suspicion that he is a great hand at dry humour. It is not till you have closed the volume, that you wonder who it is, that has had the hardihood to intrude such imbecility upon an indulgent world.'

'Come, come! Mr. Puff is a worthy gentleman. Let him cease to dusk the radiancy of Ariosto's sunny stanzas, and I shall be the first man who will do justice to his merits. He certainly rattles prettily about tenses, and terminations, and is not an inelegant grammarian.'

'Another failure among the booksellers to-day!'

'Indeed! Literature, I think, is at a low ebb.'

'Certainly. There is nothing like a fall of stocks to affect what it is the fashion to style the Literature of the present day—a fungus production, which has flourished from the artificial state of our society—the mere creature of our imaginary wealth. Everybody being very rich, has afforded to be very literary—books being considered a luxury, almost as elegant and necessary as ottomans, bonbons, and pier-glasses. Consols at 100 were the origin of all book societies. The Stockbrokers' ladies took off the quarto travels, and the hot-pressed poetry. They were the patronesses of your patent ink, and your wire-wove paper. That is all passed. Twenty per cent difference in the value of our public securities from this time last year—that little incident has done more for the restoration of the old English feeling, than all the exertions of Church and State united. Oh! there is nothing like a fall in Consols to bring the blood of our good people of England into cool order. It is your grand state medicine—your veritable Doctor Sangrado!'

'A fall in stocks ! and halt ! to "the spread of knowledge !" and "the progress of liberal principles" is like that of a man too late for post-horses. A fall in stocks ! and where are your London Universities and your Mechanics' Institutes, and your new Docks ? Where your philosophy, your philanthropy, and your competition ? National prejudices revive, as national prosperity decreases. If the Consols were at sixty, we should be again bellowing, God save the King ! eating roast beef, and damning the French.'

'And you imagine literature is equally affected, Grey ?'

'Clearly. We were literary, because we were rich. Amid the myriad of volumes which issued monthly from the press, what one was not written for the mere hour ? It is all very well to buy mechanical poetry, and historical novels, when our purses have a plethora ; but now, my dear fellow, depend upon it, the game is up. We have no scholars now—no literary recluses—no men who ever appear to *think*. "Scribble, scribble, scribble," as the Duke of Cumberland said to Gibbon, should be the motto of the mighty "nineteenth century."'

'Southey, I think, Grey, is an exception.'

'By no means. Southey is a political writer—a writer for a particular purpose. All his works, from those in three volumes quarto, to those in one duodecimo, are alike political pamphlets. Sharon Turner, in his solitude, alone seems to have his eye upon Prince Posterity ; but, as might be expected, the public consequently has not its eye upon Sharon Turner. Twenty years hence they may discover that they had a prophet among them, and knew him not.'

'His history is certainly a splendid work, but little known. Lingard's, which in ten years' time will not be known even by name, sells admirably, I believe.'

'I was very much amused, Cleveland, with Allen's review of Lingard in the Edinburgh. His opinion of "the historian's" style—that it combined, at the same

time, the excellencies of Gibbon, and Hume—was one of the most exquisite specimens of irony that, I think, I ever met with : it was worthy of former days. I was just going to give up the Edinburgh, when I read that sentence, and I continued it in consequence.’

‘We certainly want a master-spirit to set us right, Grey. Scott, our second Shakspeare, we, of course, cannot expect to step forward to direct the public mind. He is too much engaged in delighting it. Besides, he is not the man for it. He is not a *littérateur*. We want Byron.’

‘Ah ! there was the man ! And that such a man should be lost to us, at the very moment that he had begun to discover why it had pleased the Omnipotent to have endowed him with such powers !’

‘If one thing were more characteristic of Byron’s mind than another, it was his strong, shrewd, common sense—his pure, unalloyed sagacity.’

‘You knew the glorious being, I think, Cleveland ?’

‘Well ; I was slightly acquainted with him, when in England ; slightly, however, for I was then very young. But many years afterwards I met him in Italy. It was at Pisa, just before he left that place for Genoa. I was then very much struck at the alteration in his appearance.’

‘Indeed !’

‘Yes ; his face was very much swollen, and he was getting fat. His hair was grey, and his countenance had lost that spiritual expression which it once so eminently possessed. His teeth were decaying ; and he said, that if ever he came to England, it would be to consult Wayte about them. I certainly was very much struck at his alteration for the worse. Besides, he was dressed in the most extraordinary manner.’

‘Slovenly ?’

‘Oh ! no, no, no—in the most dandified style that you can conceive ; but not that of an English dandy either. He had on a magnificent foreign foraging cap,

which he wore in the room, but his grey curls were quite perceptible ; and a frogged surtout ; and he had a large gold chain round his neck, and pushed into his waistcoat pocket. I imagined, of course, that a glass was attached to it ; but I afterwards found that it bore nothing but a quantity of trinkets. He had also another gold chain tight round his neck, like a collar.'

'How extraordinary ! And did you converse much with him ?'

'I was not long at Pisa, but we never parted, and there was only one subject of conversation—England, England, England. I never met a man in whom the *maladie du pays* was so strong. Byron was certainly at this time restless and discontented. He was tired of his dragoon captains, and pensioned poetasters, and he dared not come back to England with, what he considered, a tarnished reputation. His only thought was of some desperate exertion to clear himself. It was for this he went to Greece. When I was with him, he was in correspondence with some friends in England, about the purchase of a large tract of land in Columbia. He affected a great admiration of Bolivar.'

'Who, by the bye, is a great man.'

'Assuredly.'

'Your acquaintance with Byron must have been one of the most gratifying incidents of your life, Cleveland ?'

'Certainly ; I may say with Friar Martin, in Goetz of Berlichingen, "The sight of him touched my heart. It is a pleasure to have seen a great man."'

'Hobhouse was a very faithful friend to him ?'

'His conduct has been beautiful—and Byron had a thorough affection for him in spite of a few squibs, and a few drunken speeches, which damned good-natured friends have always been careful to repeat.'

'The loss of Byron can never be retrieved. He was indeed a man—a *real man* ; and when I say this, I award him, in my opinion, the most splendid character which human nature need aspire to. At least, I, for my part,

have no ambition to be considered either a divinity, or an angel; and truly, when I look round upon the creatures alike effeminate in mind and body, of which *the world* is, in general, composed, I fear that even my ambition is too exalted. Byron's mind was like his own ocean—sublime in its yesty madness—beautiful in its glittering summer brightness—mighty in the lone magnificence of its waste of waters—gazed upon from the magic of its own nature—yet capable of representing, but, as in a glass darkly, the natures of all others. I say, Cleveland, here comes the greatest idiot in town; Craven Bucke. He came to me the other day complaining bitterly of the imperfections of Johnson's Dictionary. He had looked out *Doncaster St. Leger* in it, and could not find the word.'

'How d'ye do, Bucke? you are just the man I wanted to meet. Make a note of it while I remember. There is an edition of Johnson just published, in which you will find every single word you want. Now put it down at once. It is published under the title of John Bee's Slang Lexicon. Good b'ye! How is your brother?'

'Pray, Cleveland, what do you think of Milman's "new dramatic poem," Anne Boleyn?'

'I think it is the dulllest work on the Catholic Question that has yet appeared.'

'Is it true, that Lockhart is going to have the Quarterly?'

'It was told me as a positive fact to-day. I believe it.'

'Murray cannot do better. It is absolutely necessary that he should do something. Lockhart is a man of talents. Do you know him?'

'Not in the least.—He certainly is a man of great powers, but I think rather too hot for the Quarterly.'

'Oh! no, no, no—a little of the Albemarle Antiattribution will soon cool the fiery wheels of his bounding chariot. Come! I see our horses.'

'Hyde Park is greatly changed since I was a dandy, Vivian. Pray, do the Misses Otranto still live in that house?'

‘Yes—blooming as ever.’

‘It is the fashion to abuse Horace Walpole, but I really think him one of the most delightful writers that ever existed. I wonder who is to be the Horace Walpole of the present century? some one perhaps we least suspect.’

‘Vivida Vis, think you?’

‘More than probable. I will tell you who ought to be writing Memoirs—Lord Dropmore. Does my Lord Manfred keep his mansion there, next to the Misses Otranto?’

‘I believe so, and lives there.’

‘I knew him in Germany—a singular man, and not understood. Perhaps he does not understand himself.’

‘I will join you in an instant, Cleveland. I just want to speak one word to Master Osborne, whom I see coming down here. Well, Osborne! I must come and knock you up one of these mornings. I have got a nice little commission for you from Lady Julia Knighton, to which you must pay particular attention.’

‘Well, Mr. Grey, how does Lady Julia like the bay mare?’

‘Very much, indeed; but she wants to know what you have done about the chesnut?’

‘Oh! put it off, Sir, in the prettiest style, on young Mr. Feoffment, who has just married, and taken a house in Gower Street. He wanted a bit of blood—hopes he likes it!’

‘Hopes he does, Jack. There is a particular favour which you can do me, Osborne, and which I am sure you will. Ernest Clay—you know Ernest Clay—a most excellent fellow is Ernest Clay, you know, and a great friend of yours, Osborne;—I wish you would just step down to Connaught Place, and look at those bays he bought of Harry Mounteney. He is in a little trouble, and we must do what we can for him—you know he is an excellent fellow, and a great friend of yours. Thank you, thank you—I knew you would. Good morning:—remember Lady Julia. So you really fitted young Feoff-

ment with the chesnut. Well, that was admirable!—Good morning;—good morning.’

‘I do not know whether you care for these things at all, Cleveland, but Premium, a famous millionaire, has gone this morning, for I know not how much! Half the new world will be ruined; and in this old one, a most excellent fellow, my friend Ernest Clay. He was engaged to Premium’s daughter—his *dernière* resource; and now, of course, it is all up with him.’

‘I was at College with his brother, Augustus Clay. He is a nephew of Lord Mounteney’s, is he not?’

‘The very same. Poor fellow! I do not know what we must do for him. I think I shall advise him to change his name to *Clay-ville*; and if the world ask him the reason of the euphonious augmentation, why, he can swear it was to distinguish himself from his brothers. Too many *roués* of the same name will never do.—And now spurs to our steeds! for we are going at least three miles out of our way, and I must collect my senses, and arrange my curls before dinner; for I have to flirt with, at least, three fair ones.’

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLOT

THESE conversations play the very deuce with one’s story. I had intended to have commenced this book with something quite terrific—a murder or a marriage: and I find that all my great ideas have ended in a lounge. After all it is, perhaps, the most natural termination. In life surely, man is not always as monstrously busy, as he appears to be in novels and romances. We are not always in action—not always making speeches, or making money, or making war, or making love. Occasionally we talk,—about the weather, generally—sometimes about ourselves—oftener about our

friends—as often about our enemies—at least, those who have any ; which, in my opinion, is the vulgarest of all possessions ;—I have no enemies. Am I not an amiable fellow ? At this moment, I am perfectly happy—am I not a lucky fellow ?

And what is your situation, Mr. Felicity, you will ask ? Have you just made a brilliant speech in the House ? or have you negotiated a great loan for a little nation ? or have you touched, for the first time, some fair one's cheek ? In short, what splendid juggle have you been successful in ? Have you deluded your own country, or another ? Have you deceived another's heart—or, are you, yourself, a dupe ? Not at all, my sweet questioner—I am strolling on a sunny lawn, and flanking butterflies with a tandem whip.

I have not felt so well for these six months. What would I have given to have had my blood dancing as it is now, while I was scribbling the first volume and a half of this dear book. But there is nothing like the country ! I think I was saying that these lounges in St. James's Park do not always very materially advance the progress of our narrative. Not that I would insinuate that the progress of our narrative has flagged at all ; not in the least, I am sure we cannot be accused of being prosy. There has been no *Balaam* (I don't approve this neologism ; but I am too indolent, at present, to think of another word), in these books. I have withstood every temptation ; and now, though I scarcely know in what way to make out this volume, here I am, without the least intention of finally proving that our Vivian Grey is the son of the Marquess of Carabas, by a former and secret marriage—in Italy, of course,—Count Anselmo—Naples—and an old nurse, etc. etc. ; or that Mrs. Felix Lorraine is Horace Grey, Esquire, in disguise ; or of making that much neglected beauty, Julia Manvers, arrive in the last scene with a chariot with four horses and a patent axle-tree—just in time !—Alas ! dear Julia ! we may meet again. In the meantime the memory of

your bright blue eyes shall not escape me ; and when we *do* meet, why, you shall talk more and laugh less. But you were young when last you listened to my nonsense ; one of those innocent young ladies, who, on entering a drawing-room, take a rapid glance at their curls in a pier glass, and then, flying to the eternal round table, seek refuge in an admiring examination of the beauties of the Florence Gallery, or the binding of Batty's views.

This slight allusion to Julia is a digression. I was about to inform you, that I have no intention of finishing this book by anything extraordinary. The truth is, and this is quite confidential, invention is not to be 'the feature' of this work. What I have seen, I have written about ; and what I shall see, I shall perhaps, also write about. Some day I may, perchance, write for fame ; at present, I write for pleasure. I think, in that case, I will write an epic, but it shall be in prose. The reign of Poesy is over, at least for half a century ; and by that time my bones will be bleached. I think I should have made a pretty poet. Indeed, it is with great difficulty that I prevent my paragraphs from hobbling into stanzas.

Stop ! I see the finest PURPLE EMPEROR, just alighting upon that myrtle. Beautiful insect ! thy title is too humble for thy bright estate ! for what is the pageantry of princes to the splendour of thy gorgeous robes ? I wish I were a purple Emperor ! I came into the world naked—and you in a garment of glory. I dare not subject myself to the heat of the sun, for fear of a coup de soleil ; nor to a damp day for fear of the rheumatism ; but the free sky is your proper habitation, and the air your peculiar element. What care you, bright one, for Dr. Kitchener, or the Almanach des Gourmands—you, whose food is the dew of heaven, and the honied juices which you distil from every flower ? Shadowed by a leaf of that thick shrub, I could for a moment fancy that your colour is sooty black ; and yet now that the soft wind has blown the leaf aside, my eye is suddenly dazzled at the resplendent glow of your vivid

purple. Now I gaze in admiration at the delightful, and amazing variety of your shifting tints, playing in the sunbeam ; now, as it is lighting up the splendour of your purple mantle, and now lending fresh brilliancy to your rings of burnished gold !

My brilliant purple Emperor ? I must have you—I must indeed :—but I wish, if possible, to bring you down, rather by the respiration of my flank than the impulse of my thong.—Smack !—Confound the easterly wind playing up my nostril. I have missed him—and there he flies, mounting higher and higher, till at last he fixes on the topmost branch of yon lofty acacia. What shall I do ? I am not the least in the humour for writing.

There is the luncheon bell ! Luncheon is a meal, if meal it may be called, which I do not patronise. 'Tis very well for schoolboys and young ladies ; acceptable to the first because they are always ready to devour—and to the second, because a glass of sherry and a slice of reindeer's tongue, and a little marmalade, and a little Neufchâtel, enable them to toss their pretty little heads at dinner, and 'not touch anything' ; be proportionately pitied, and look proportionately interesting. Luncheon is the modern mystery of the Bona Dea. I say nothing, but I once acted Clodius, in this respect. I never wondered afterwards at a woman's want of appetite.

But in the dear delicious country, and in a house where no visitor is staying, and where I am tempted to commit suicide hourly, I think I must take a very thin crust, or one traveller's biscuit, and a little Hock and Seltzer ; although I am in that horrid situation, neither possessing appetite, nor wanting refreshment. What shall I do now ? Who can write when the sun shines ? It's a warm, soft, sunny day, though in March. I'll lie down on the lawn and play with my Italian greyhound. Don't think me a puppy for having one. It was given to me by ——. That's a sufficient excuse, is it not ?

Now Hyacinth, now my Hyacinth, now my own

dog ; try to leap over me !—frolick away, my beautiful one ; I love thee, and have I not cause ? What confidence have you violated ? What sacred oaths have you outraged ? Have you proved a craven in the hour of trial ? Have I found you wanting when I called, or false when I fondled ? Why do you start so, my pretty dog ? Why are your eyes so fixed, your ears so erect ? Pretty creature ! does anything frighten you ? Kiss me, my own Hyacinth, my dear, dear dog ! Oh ! you little wretch ! you've bit my lip. Get out ! I'll not speak to you for a fortnight.

I'll get Spenser's Faery Queen—I'm just in the humour for reading it ; but still it's a horrid bore to get up and go to the library. Come ! a desperate exertion ! On my legs again—there's nothing like energy. Here's the book. Oh ! how I shall revel in his sweet and bitter fancies !—Confusion ! I've brought a volume of Tillotson's Sermons. I hate the fellow ! That's the advantage of your country libraries, having all your books bound the same.

Now I don't know what I shall do. I think I shall amuse myself by jumping over that *ha-ha* ;—I'm quite confident I can do it—and yet whenever I'm about trying, my heart sadly misgives me. It's a complete fallacy ; it's devilish deep though. There—that easterly wind has balked me again ; and here I am, up to my knees in mud, and my pretty violet-coloured slippers spoilt !

First dinner bell ! A hecatomb to the son of Latona, —his rays are getting less powerful, and it's getting a little later. Though nobody is staying here, I'll go and dress myself in the most elaborate manner ; it will assist in the destruction of the time. What a dull dinner ! I have eaten of everything :—*soupe printanière* (twice)—fillets of turbot *à la crème*—fowl *à la Montmorenci*, garnished with *ragoût à l'Allemande*—neck of veal *à la Ste. Menehoult*—*marinade* of chickens *à la St. Florentin*—*Muriton* of red tongue, with spinach—six quails—two

dishes of kale, merely with plain butter—half a dozen orange jellies, *en mosaïques*—cauliflowers with *velouté* sauce, and a *petit gâteau à la mæ non*—a *soufflée* with lemon, and a dozen Neufchâtel cheeses—a bottle of Markebrunnen, a pint of Latour, and a pint of Maraschino. Gone through it all ; and yet here I am, breathing as freely as a young eagle. Oh ! for an indigestion, if merely for the sake of variety ! Good heavens ! I'm afraid I'm getting healthy !

Now for Vivian Grey again ! I don't know how it is, but I cannot write to-day ; the room's so hot. Open that door ; now I shall get on better. Oh, what a wretched pen ! I can't get out a sentence. The room's too cold ;—shut that horrid door. Write I must, and will,—what's the matter ? It's this great bowstring of a cravat. Off with it ! who could ever write in a cravat ?

CHAPTER III

BUCKHURST LODGE

MR. Cleveland and Mrs. Felix Lorraine again met, and the gentleman scarcely appeared to be aware that this meeting was not their first. The lady sighed, and fainted, and remonstrated ; and terrific scenes followed each other in frightful succession. She reproached Mr. Cleveland with passages of letters. He stared, and deigned not a reply to an artifice, which he considered equally impudent and shallow. Vivian was forced to interfere ; but as he deprecated all explanation, his interference was of little avail ; and, as it was ineffectual for one party, and uncalled for by the other, it was, of course, not encouraged. At length Mrs. Felix broke through all bounds. Now the enraged woman insulted Mrs. Cleveland, and now humbled herself before Mrs. Cleveland's husband. Her insults, and her humility,

were treated with equal hauteur ; and at length the Clevelands left Buckhurst Lodge.

Peculiar as was Mrs. Lorraine's conduct in this particular respect, we should in candour, confess, that, at this moment, it was in all others most exemplary. Her whole soul seemed concentrated in the success of the approaching struggle. No office was too mechanical for her attention, or too elaborate for her enthusiastic assiduity. Her attentions were not confined merely to Vivian, and the Marquess, but were lavished with equal generosity on their colleagues. She copied letters for Sir Berdmore, and composed letters for Lord Courtown, and construed letters to Lord Beaconsfield ; they, in return, echoed her praises to her delighted relative, who was daily congratulated on the possession of 'such a fascinating sister-in-law.'

'Well, Vivian,' said Mrs. Lorraine, to that young gentleman, the day previous to his departure from Buckhurst Lodge ; 'you are going to leave me behind you.'

'Indeed !'

'Yes ! I hope you will not want me. I am very much annoyed at not being able to go to town with you, but Lady Courtown is so pressing ! and I have really promised so often to stay a week with her, that I thought it was better to make out my promise at once, than in six months hence.'

'Well ! I am exceedingly sorry, for you really are so useful ! and the interest you take in everything is so encouraging, that, really, I very much fear we shall not be able to get on without you. The important hour draws nigh.'

'It does indeed, Vivian—and I assure you that there is no person awaiting it with intenser interest than myself. I little thought,' she added, in a low, but distinct voice, 'I little thought, when I first reached England, that I should ever again be interested in anything in this world.' Vivian was silent—for he had nothing to say.

‘Vivian!’ very briskly resumed Mrs. Lorraine, ‘I shall get you to frank all my letters for me. I shall never trouble the Marquess again. Do you know it strikes me you will make a very good speaker!’

‘You flatter me exceedingly—suppose you give me a few lessons.’

‘But you must leave off some of your wicked tricks, Vivian! You must not improvise Parliamentary papers!’

‘Improvise papers, Mrs. Lorraine! what can you mean?’

‘Oh! nothing. I never mean anything.’

‘But you must have had some meaning.’

‘Some meaning! Oh! yes, I daresay I had;—I meant—I meant—do you think it will rain to-day?’

‘Every prospect of a hard frost. I never knew before that I was an improvisatore.’

‘Nor I. Have you heard from papa lately. I suppose he is quite in spirits at your success?’

‘My father is a man who seldom gives way to any elation of mind.’

‘Ah, indeed! a philosopher, I have no doubt, like his son.’

‘I have no claims, I believe, to the title of philosopher, although I have had the advantage of studying in the school of Mrs. Felix Lorraine.’

‘Lord! what do you mean? If I thought you meant to be impertinent, I really would pull that pretty little curl; but I excuse you—I think the boy means well.’

‘Oh! the boy “means nothing—he never means anything.”’

‘Come, Vivian! we are going to part. Do not let us quarrel the last day. There, my little pet, there is a sprig of myrtle for you!’

“What! not accept my foolish flower?
Nay then, I am indeed unblest!”

and now you want it all! Oh, you unreasonable young

man ! If I were not the kindest lady in the land I should tear this little sprig into a thousand pieces sooner ; but come, my pretty pet ! you shall have it. There ! it looks quite imposing in your button-hole. How handsome you look to-day ! ’

‘How agreeable you are to-day ! I do so love compliments ! ’

‘Oh ! Vivian—will you never give me credit for anything but a light and callous heart ? Will you never be convinced that—that—but why make this humiliating confession ? Oh ! no, let me be misunderstood for ever ! The time may come, when Vivian Grey will find that Amalia Lorraine was——’

‘Was what, Madam ? ’

‘You shall choose the word, Vivian.’

‘Say then my *friend*.’

‘Tis a monosyllable full of meaning, and I will not quarrel with it. And now, adieu ! Heaven prosper you ! Believe me, that my first thoughts, and my last, are for you, and of you ! ’

CHAPTER IV

THE POST

‘THIS is very kind of you, Grey ! I was afraid my note might not have caught you. You have not breakfasted ? Really I wish you would take up your quarters in Carabas House, for I want you now every moment.’

‘What is the urgent business of this morning, my Lord ? ’

‘Oh ! I have seen Beresford.’

‘Hah ! ’

‘And everything is most satisfactory. I did not go into detail ; I left that for you : but I ascertained

sufficient to convince me, that management is now alone required.'

'Well, my Lord, I trust that will not be wanting.'

'No, Vivian—you have opened my eyes to the situation in which fortune has placed me. The experience of every day only proves the truth, and soundness, of your views. Fortunate, indeed, was the hour in which we met.'

'My Lord, I do trust that it was a meeting, which neither of us will live to repent.'

'Impossible! my dearest friend. I do not hesitate to say, that I would not change my present lot for that of any peer of this realm; no, not for that of His Majesty's most favoured counsellor. What! with my character and my influence, and my connections, I to be a tool! I, the Marquess of Carabas! I say nothing of my own powers; but, as you often most justly, and truly, observe, the world has had the opportunity of judging of them; and I think, I may recur, without vanity, to the days in which my voice had some weight in the Royal Councils. And as I have often remarked, I have friends—I have you, Vivian. My career is before you. I know what I should have done, at your age; not to say, what I did do—I to be a tool! The very last person that ought to be a tool. But I see my error: you have opened my eyes, and blessed be the hour in which we met. But we must take care how we act, Vivian; we must be wary—eh! Vivian—wary—wary. People must know what their situations are,—eh! Vivian?'

'Exceedingly useful knowledge, my Lord, but I do not exactly understand the particular purport of your Lordship's last observation.'

'You do not, eh?' asked the peer, and he fixed his eyes as earnestly, and expressively, as he possibly could upon his young companion. 'Well, I thought not. I was positive it was not true,' continued the Marquess, in a murmur.

'What, my Lord?'

'Oh! nothing, nothing; people talk at random—at random—at random. I feel confident you quite agree with me,—eh! Vivian?'

'Really, my Lord, I fear I am unusually dull this morning.'

'Dull! no, no, you quite agree with me. I feel confident you do. People must be taught what their situations are—that is what I was saying, Vivian. My Lord Courtown,' added the Marquess in a whisper, 'is not to have everything his own way,—eh! Vivian?'

'Oh, oh!' thought Vivian, 'this then is the result of that admirable creature, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, staying a week with her dear friend, Lady Courtown.'—'My Lord, it would be singular, if, in the Carabas party, the Carabas interest was not the predominant one.'

'I knew you thought so. I could not believe, for a minute, that you could think otherwise: but some people take such strange ideas into their heads—I cannot account for them. I felt confident what would be your opinion. My Lord Courtown is not to carry everything before him, in the spirit that I have lately observed—or rather, in the spirit which I understand, from very good authority, is exhibited. Eh! Vivian—that is your opinion, is not it?'

'Oh! my dear Marquess, *we* must think alike on this, as on all points.'

'I knew it. I felt confident as to your sentiments upon this subject. I cannot conceive, why some people take such strange ideas into their heads! I knew that you could not disagree with me upon this point. No, no, no, my Lord Courtown must feel which is the predominant interest, as you so well express it. How choice your expressions always are! I do not know how it is, but you always hit upon the right expression, Vivian.—*The predominant interest*—the pre-do-mi-nant—in-te-rest. To be sure. What! with my high character and connections—with my stake in society, was it to be expected that I, the Marquess of Carabas, was going to make

any move which compromised the predominancy of my interests. No, no, no, my Lord Courtown, the predominant interest must be kept predominant,—eh! Vivian?’

‘To be sure, to be sure, my Lord; explicitness and decision will soon arrange any *désagréments*.’

‘I have been talking to the Marchioness, Vivian, upon the expediency of her opening the season early. I think a course of Parliamentary dinners would produce a good effect. It gives a tone to a political party.’

‘Certainly; the science of political gastronomy has never been sufficiently studied.’

‘Egad! Vivian, I am in such spirits this morning. This business of Beresford so delights me; and finding you agree with me about Lord Courtown, I was confident as to your sentiments on that point. But some people take such strange ideas into their heads! To be sure, to be sure, the predominant interest, mine—that is to say, our’s, Vivian, is the predominant interest. I have no idea of the predominant interest, not being predominant; that would be singular! I knew you would agree with me—we always agree. ’Twas a lucky hour when we met. Two minds so exactly alike! I was just your very self when I was young; and as for you—my career is before you.’

Here entered Mr. Sadler with the letters.

‘One from Courtown.’ I wonder if he has seen Mounteney. Mounteney is a very good-natured fellow, and I think might be managed. Ah! I wish you could get hold of him, Vivian; you would soon bring him round. What it is to have brains, Vivian!’ and here the Marquess shook his head very pompously, and at the same time, tapped very significantly on his left temple. ‘Hah! what—what is all this! Here, read it, read it, man.—I have no head to-day.’

Vivian took the letter, and his quick eye dashed through its contents in a second. It was from Lord

Courtown, and dated far in the country. It talked of private communications, and premature conduct, and the suspicious, not to say dishonest, behaviour of Mr. Vivian Grey: it trusted that such conduct was not sanctioned by his Lordship, but 'nevertheless obliged to act with decision—regretted the necessity,' etc., etc., etc., etc. In short, Lord Courtown had deserted, and recalled his pledge as to the official appointment promised to Mr. Cleveland, 'because that promise was made while he was the victim of delusions created by the representations of Mr. Grey.'

'What can all this mean, my Lord?'

The Marquess swore a fearful oath, and threw another letter.

'This is from Lord Beaconsfield, my Lord,' said Vivian, with a face pallid as death, 'and apparently the composition of the same writer; at least, it is the same tale, the same refacimento of lies, and treachery, and cowardice, doled out with diplomatic politesse. But I will off to —shire instantly. It is not yet too late to save everything. This is Wednesday; on Thursday afternoon, I shall be at Norwood Park. Thank God! I came this morning.'

The face of the Marquess, who was treacherous as the wind, seemed already to indicate, 'Adieu! Mr. Vivian Grey!' but that countenance exhibited some very different passions, when it glanced over the contents of the next epistle. There was a tremendous oath—and a dead silence. His Lordship's florid countenance turned as pale as that of his companion. The perspiration stole down in heavy drops. He gasped for breath!

'Good God! my Lord, what is the matter?'

'The matter!' howled the Marquess, 'the matter! That I have been a vain, weak, miserable fool!' and then there was another oath, and he flung the letter to the other side of the table.

It was the official congé of the Most Noble Sydney Marquess of Carabas. His Majesty had no longer any

occasion for his services. His successor was Lord Courtown!

I will not affect to give any description of the conduct of the Marquess of Carabas at this moment. He raved! he stamped! he blasphemed! but the whole of his abuse was levelled against his former 'monstrous clever' young friend; of whose character he had so often boasted that his own was the prototype, but who was now an adventurer—a swindler—a scoundrel—a liar—a base, deluding, flattering, fawning villain, etc., etc., etc., etc.

'My Lord!'—said Vivian.

'I will not hear you—out on your fair words! They have duped me enough already. That I, with my high character, and connections! that I, the Marquess of Carabas, should have been the victim of the arts of a young scoundrel!'

Vivian's fist was once clenched—but it was only for a moment. The Marquess leant back in his chair, with his eyes shut. In the agony of the moment, a projecting tooth of his upper jaw, had forced itself through his under lip, and from the wound, the blood was flowing freely over his dead white countenance. Vivian left the room.

CHAPTER V

THE RACK

HE stopped one moment on the landing-place, ere he was about to leave the house for ever.

'Tis all over! and so, Vivian Grey, your game is up! and to die too, like a dog!—a woman's dupe! Were I despot, I should perhaps satiate my vengeance upon this female fiend, with the assistance of the rack—but that cannot be; and after all, it would be but a poor revenge in one who has worshipped the **EMPIRE OF THE**

INTELLECT, to vindicate the agony I am now enduring, upon the base body of a woman. No ! 'tis not all over. There is yet an intellectual rack of which few dream : far, far more terrific than the most exquisite contrivances of Parysatis.—Madeleine,' said he to a female attendant that passed, 'is your mistress at home ?'

'She is, Sir.'

'Tis well,' said Vivian, and he sprang upstairs.

'Health to the lady of our love !' said Vivian Grey, as he entered the elegant boudoir of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. 'In spite of the easterly wind, which has spoiled my beauty for the season, I could not refrain from enquiring after your prosperity, before I went to the Marquess. Have you heard the news ?'

'News ! no ; what news ?'

'Tis a sad tale,' said Vivian, with a melancholy voice.

'O ! then, pray do not tell it me. I am in no humour for sorrow to-day. Come ! a bon mot, or a calembour, or *exit* Mr. Vivian Grey.'

'Well then, good morning ! I am off for a black crape, or a Barcelona kerchief.—Mrs. Cleveland is—*dead*.'

'Dead !' exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine.

'Ay ; cold dead. She died last night—suddenly.—Is it not horrible ?'

'Shocking !' exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine, with a mournful voice, and an eye dancing with joy. 'Why ! Mr. Grey, I do declare you are weeping.'

'It is not for the departed !'

'Nay, Vivian ! for Heaven's sake, what is the matter ?'

'My dear Mrs. Lorraine !'—But here the speaker's voice was choked with grief, and he could not proceed.

'Pray compose yourself.'

'Mrs. Felix Lorraine, can I speak with you half an hour, undisturbed ?'

'Oh ! certainly, by all means. I will ring for Made-

leine. Madeleine ! mind, I am not at home to any one. Well ! what is the matter ? ’

‘ Oh ! Madam, I must pray your patience—I wish you to shrive a penitent.’

‘ Good God ! Mr. Grey ! for Heaven’s sake, be explicit.’

‘ For Heaven’s sake—for your sake—for my soul’s sake, I would be explicit ; but explicitness is not the language of such as I am. Can you listen to a tale of horror ; can you promise me to contain yourself ? ’

‘ I will promise anything. Pray, pray proceed.’

But in spite of her earnest solicitations her companion was mute. At length he arose from his chair, and leaning on the chimney-piece, buried his face in his hands, and wept most bitterly.

‘ Vivian,’ said Mrs. Lorraine, ‘ have you seen the Marquess yet ? ’

‘ Not yet,’ he sobbed ; ‘ I am going to him ; but I am in no humour for business this morning.’

‘ Oh ! compose yourself, I beseech you. I will hear everything. You shall not complain of an inattentive, or an irritable auditor. Now, my dear Vivian, sit down and tell me all.’ She led him to a chair, and then, after stifling his sobs, with a broken voice he proceeded.

‘ You will recollect, Madam, that accident made me acquainted with certain circumstances connected with yourself, and Mr. Cleveland. Alas ! actuated by the vilest of sentiments, I conceived a violent hatred against that gentleman—a hatred only to be equalled by my passion for you ; but, I find difficulty in dwelling upon the details of this sad story of jealousy and despair.’

‘ Oh ! speak, speak ! compensate for all you have done, by your present frankness ;—be brief—be brief.’

‘ I will be *brief*,’ shouted Vivian, with terrific earnestness ; ‘ I will be *brief*. Know then, Madam, that in order to prevent the intercourse between you and Mr. Cleveland from proceeding, I obtained his friendship, and became the confidant of his heart’s sweetest secret. Thus

situated, I suppressed the letters, with which I was entrusted from him to you, and poisoning his mind, I accounted for your silence, by your being employed in *other* correspondence ; nay, I did more, with the malice of a fiend, I boasted of—nay, do not stop me ; I have more to tell.’

Mrs. Felix Lorraine, with compressed lips, and looks of horrible earnestness, gazed in silence.

‘The result of all this you know,—but the most terrible part is to come ; and, by a strange fascination, I fly to confess my crimes at your feet, even, while the last minutes have witnessed my most heinous one. Oh ! Madam, I have stood over the bier of the departed ; I have mingled my tears with those of the sorrowing widower,—his young, and tender, child was on my knee ; and, as I kissed his innocent lips, methought it was but my duty to the departed, to save the father from his mother’s rival—’ He stopped.

‘Yes,—yes,—yes,’ said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, in a low whisper.

‘It was then, even then, in the hour of his desolation, that I mentioned your name, that it might the more *disgust* him ; and, while he wept over his virtuous and sainted wife, I dwelt on the vices of his rejected *Mistress*.’

Mrs. Lorraine clasped her hands, and moved restlessly on her seat.

‘Nay ! do not stop me ;—let me tell *all*. “Cleveland,” said I, “if ever you become the husband of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, remember my last words :—it will be well for you, if your frame be like that of Mithridates of Pontus, and proof against—*poison*.”’

‘And did you say this ?’ shrieked the woman.

‘Even these were my words.’

‘Then may all evil blast you !’ She threw herself on the sofa : her voice was choked with the convulsions of her passion, and she writhed in the most fearful agony.

Vivian Grey, lounging in an arm-chair, in the easiest

of postures, and with a face brilliant with smiles, watched his victim with the eye of a Mephistophiles.

She slowly recovered, and with a broken voice poured forth her sacred absolution to the relieved penitent.

‘You wonder I do not stab you,—hah! hah! hah! there is no need for *that*!—the good powers be praised, that you refused the draught I once proffered. Know, wretch, that your race is run. Within five minutes, you will breathe a beggar, and an outcast. Your golden dreams are over—your cunning plans are circumvented—your ambitious hopes are crushed for ever—you are blighted in the very spring of your life. Oh! may you never die! May you wander for ever, the butt of the world’s malice? and may the slow moving finger of scorn, point where’er you go at the ruined Charlatan!’

‘Hah, hah! is it so, my lady? Oh! think you, that Vivian Grey would fall by a woman’s wile? Oh! think you that Vivian Grey could be crushed by such a worthless thing as *you*! Know, then, that your political intrigues have been as little concealed from *me*, as your personal ones;—I have been acquainted with all. The Marquess has, himself, seen the Minister, and is more firmly established in his pride of place than ever. I have, myself, seen our colleagues, whom you tampered with, and their hearts are still true, and their purpose still fixed. All, all prospers; and ere five days are passed, “the *Charlatan*” will be a *Senator*.’

The shifting expression of Mrs. Lorraine’s countenance, while Vivian was speaking, would have baffled the most cunning painter. Her complexion was capricious as the chameleon’s, and her countenance was so convulsed, that her features seemed of all shapes and sizes. One large vein protruded nearly a quarter of an inch from her forehead; and the dank light which gleamed in her tearful eye, was like an unwholesome meteor quivering in a marsh. When he ended, she sprang from the sofa, and looking up, and extending her arms with unmeaning

wildness, she gave one loud shriek, and dropped like a bird shot on the wing—she had burst a blood-vessel.

Vivian raised her on the sofa, and paid her every possible attention. There is always a vile apothecary lurking about the mansions of the noble, and so a Mr. Andrewes soon appeared, and to this worthy, and the attendant Madeleine Vivian delivered his patient.

Had Vivian Grey left the boudoir a pledged bridegroom, his countenance could not have been more triumphant; but he was labouring under the most unnatural excitement: for it is singular, that when, as he left the house, the porter told him that Mr. Cleveland was with his Lord, Vivian had no idea at the moment, what individual bore that name. The fresh air of the street revived him, and somewhat cooled the bubbling of his blood. It was then that the man's information struck upon his senses.

'So, poor Cleveland!' thought Vivian, 'then he knows all!' His own misery he had not yet thought of; but, when Cleveland occurred to him, with his ambition once more baulked—his high hopes once more blasted—and his honourable soul once more deceived,—when he thought of his fair wife, and his infant children, and his ruined prospects; a sickness came over his heart, he grew dizzy, and fell.

'And the gentleman's ill, I think,' said an honest Irishman; and, in the fulness of his charity, he placed Vivian on a door step.

'So it seems!' said a genteel passenger in black; and he snatched, with great sang-froid, Vivian's gold watch. 'Stop thief!' halloed the Hibernian. Paddy was tripped up. There was a row; in the midst of which, Vivian Grey crawled to an hotel.

CHAPTER VI

THE CLUB

IN half an hour Vivian was at Mr. Cleveland's door. 'My master is at the Marquess of Carabas', Sir ; he will not return, but is going immediately to Richmond, where Mrs. Cleveland is staying.'

Vivian immediately wrote to Mr. Cleveland. 'If your master have left the Marquess's, let this be forwarded to him at Richmond immediately.'

'Cleveland !

'You know all. It would be mockery were I to say, that at this moment I am not thinking of myself. I am a ruined man, in body, and in mind. But my own misery is nothing ; I can die—I can go mad—and who will be harmed ? But you ! I had wished that we should never meet again ; but my hand refuses to trace the thoughts with which my heart is full, and I am under the sad necessity of requesting you to see me *once more*. We have been betrayed—and by a woman ; but, there has been revenge ! oh ! what revenge !

VIVIAN GREY.'

When Vivian left Mr. Cleveland's, he actually did not know what to do with himself. Home, at present, he could not face, and so he continued to wander about, quite unconscious of locality. He passed in his progress many of his acquaintance, who, from his distracted air and rapid pace, imagined that he was intent on some important business. At length he found himself in one of the most sequestered parts of Kensington Gardens. It was a cold, frosty day, and as Vivian flung himself upon one of the summer seats, the snow drifted from off the frozen board ; but Vivian's brow was as burning hot, as if he had been

an inhabitant of Sirius. Throwing his arms on a small garden table, he buried his face in his hands, and wept—as men can but once weep in this world !

Oh ! thou sublime and most subtle philosopher, who, in thy lamp-lit cell, art speculating upon the passions which thou hast never felt ! Oh ! thou splendid and most admirable poet, who, with cunning words, art painting with a smile a tale of woe ! tell me what is Grief, and solve me the mystery of Sorrow ?

Not for himself—for after the first pang, he would have whistled off his high hopes with the spirit of a Ripperda—not even for Cleveland—for at this moment, it must be confessed, his thoughts were not for his friend—did Vivian Grey's soul struggle as if it were about to leave its fleshly chamber. I said he wept, as men can weep but once in this world ; and yet it would have been impossible for him to have defined what, at that fearful moment, was the cause of his heart's sorrow. Incidents of childhood, of the most trivial nature, and until this moment forgotten, flashed across his memory ; he gazed on the smile of his mother—he listened to the sweet tones of his father's voice—and his hand clenched, with still more agonised grasp, his rude resting-place ; and the scalding tears dashed down his cheek in still more ardent torrents. He had no distinct remembrance of what had so lately happened ; but characters flitted before him as in a theatre in a dream—dim and shadowy, yet full of mysterious and undefinable interest ; and then there came a horrible idea across his mind, that his glittering youth was gone, and wasted ; and then there was a dark whisper of treachery, and dissimulation, and dishonour ; and then he sobbed as if his very heart were cracking. All his boasted philosophy vanished—his artificial feelings fled him. Insulted Nature re-asserted her long spurned authority, and the once proud Vivian Grey felt too humble even to curse himself. Gradually his sobs became less convulsed, and his brow more cool ; and calm from very exhaustion, he sat for upwards of an hour motionless.

At this moment there issued, with their attendant, from an adjoining shrubbery, two beautiful children. They were so exceedingly lovely, that the passenger would have stopped to gaze upon them. The eldest, who yet was very young, was leading his sister hand in hand, with slow and graceful steps, mimicking the courtesy of men. But when his eye caught Vivian's, the boy uttered a loud cry of exultation, and rushed, with the eagerness of infantine affection, to his gentle and favourite playmate. They were the young Clevelands. With what miraculous quickness will man shake off the outward semblance of grief, when his sorrow is a secret ! The mighty Merchant, who knows that in four-and-twenty hours the world must be astounded by his insolvency, will walk in the front of his confident creditor, as if he were the lord of a thousand argosies—the meditating Suicide will smile on the arm of a companion, as if to breathe in this sunny world, were the most ravishing and rapturous bliss. We cling to our stations in our fellow-creatures' minds, and memories ; we know, too well, the frail tenure on which we are in this world, great and considered personages. Experience makes us shrink from the specious sneer of Sympathy ; and when we are ourselves falling, bitter Memory whispers, that we have ourselves been neglectful.

And so it was, that, even unto these infants, Vivian Grey dared not appear other than a gay, and easy-hearted man ; and in a moment he was dancing them on his knee, and playing with their curls, and joining in their pretty prattle, and pressing their small and fragrant lips.

It was night when he paced down —. He passed his club ; that club, to become a member of which, had once been the object of his high ambition, and to gain which privilege had cost such hours of canvassing ; such interference of noble friends ; and the incurring of favours from five thousand people, 'which never could be forgotten !'

I know not what desperate feeling actuated him, but he entered the Club-house. He walked into the great saloon, and met some fifty 'most particular friends,' all of whom asked him, 'how the Marquess did,' or 'have you seen Cleveland?' and a thousand other as comfortable queries. At length, to avoid these disagreeable rencontres, and indeed, to rest himself, he went to a smaller and more private room. As he opened the door, his eyes lighted upon Cleveland.

He was standing with his back to the fire. There were only two other persons in the room: one was a friend of Cleveland's, and the other an acquaintance of Vivian's. The latter was writing at the table.

When Vivian saw Cleveland, he would have retired, but he was bid to 'come in,' in a voice of thunder.

As he entered, he instantly perceived that Cleveland was under the influence of wine. When in this situation, unlike other men, Mr. Cleveland's conduct was not distinguished by any of the little improprieties of behaviour, by which a man is always known by his friends 'to be very drunk.' He neither reeled, nor hiccupped, nor grew maudlin. The effect of drinking upon him, was only to increase the intensity of the sensation by which his mind was, at the moment, influenced. He did not even lose the consciousness of identity of persons. At this moment, it was clear to Vivian that Cleveland was under the influence of the extremest passion: his eyes rolled widely, and seemed fixed only upon vacancy. As Vivian was no friend to scenes before strangers, he bowed to the two gentlemen, and saluted Cleveland with his wonted cordiality; but his proffered hand was rudely repelled.

'Away!' exclaimed Cleveland, in a furious tone; 'I have no friendship for traitors!'

The two gentlemen stared, and the pen of the writer stopped.

'Cleveland!' said Vivian, in an earnest whisper, as he came up close to him;—'for God's sake, contain your-

self. I have written you a letter which explains all—but——,

‘Out! out upon you! Out upon your honied words, and your soft phrases! I have been their dupe too long’; and he struck Vivian with tremendous force.

‘Sir John Poynings!’ said Vivian, with a quivering lip, turning to the gentleman who was writing at the table—‘we were schoolfellows; circumstances have prevented us from meeting often in after-life, but I now ask you, with the frankness of an old acquaintance, to do me the sad service of accompanying me in this quarrel—a quarrel which, I call Heaven to witness, is not of my seeking.’

The Baronet, who was in the Guards, and, although a great dandy, quite a man of business in these matters, immediately rose from his seat, and led Vivian to a corner of the room. After some whispering, he turned round to Mr. Cleveland, and bowed to him with a very significant look. It was evident that Cleveland comprehended his meaning, for, though he was silent, he immediately pointed to the other gentleman—his friend, Mr. Castleton.

‘Mr. Castleton,’ said Sir John, giving his card, ‘Mr. Grey will accompany me to my rooms in Pall Mall; it is now ten o’clock; we shall wait two hours, in which time I hope to hear from you. I leave time, and place, and terms, to yourself. I only wish it to be understood, that it is the particular desire of my principal that the meeting should be as speedy as possible.’

About eleven o’clock, the communication from Mr. Castleton arrived. It was quite evident that Cleveland was sobered, for in one instance, Vivian observed that the style was corrected by his own hand. The hour was eight, the next morning, at —— Common, about six miles from town.

Poynings wrote to a professional friend to be on the ground at half-past seven, and then he and Vivian retired.

Did you ever fight a duel? No! nor send a challenge either? Well! you are fresh indeed! 'Tis an awkward business after all—even for the boldest. After an immense deal of negotiation, and giving the party every opportunity of coming to an *honourable* understanding, the fatal letter is, at length, signed, sealed, and sent. You pass your mornings at your second's apartments, pacing his drawing-room, with a quivering lip, and uncertain step. At length he enters with an answer; and while he reads, you endeavour to look easy, with a countenance merry with the most melancholy smile. You have no appetite for dinner, but you are too *brave* not to appear at table; and you are called out after the second glass by the arrival of your solicitor, who comes to alter your will. You pass a restless night, and rise in the morning as bilious as a Bengal general. Urged by impending fate, you make a desperate effort to accommodate matters; but in the contest between your pride and your terror, you, at the same time, prove that you are a coward, and fail in the negotiation. You both fire—and miss—and then the seconds interfere, and then you shake hands, everything being arranged in the most *honourable* manner, and to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. The next day you are seen pacing Bond Street, with an erect front, and a flashing eye—with an air at once dandyish, and heroical—a mixture, at the same time, of Brummell, and the Duke of Wellington.

It was a fine February morning. Sir John drove Vivian to the ground in his cabriolet.

'Nothing like a cab, Grey, for the business you are going on. I only keep it for *meetings*. You glide along the six miles in such style, that it actually makes you quite courageous. I remember once going down, on a similar purpose, in a post and pair; and 'pon my soul, when I came to the ground, my hand shook so that I could scarcely draw. But I was green then. Now, when I go in my cab, with Philidor with his sixteen-mile-an-hour paces, egad! I wing my man in a trice;

and take all the parties home to Pall Mall, to celebrate the event with a grilled bone, Havannahs, and Regent's punch. Ah! there! that is Cleveland that we have just passed, going to the ground in a chariot: he is a dead man, or my name is not Poynings——'

'Come, Sir John; no fear of Cleveland's dying,' said Vivian with a smile.

'What, you mean to fire in the air, and all that sort of thing?—sentimental, but slip-slop!'

The ground is measured—all is arranged. Cleveland, a splendid shot, fired first. His pistol grazed Vivian's elbow. Vivian fired in the air. The seconds interfered. Cleveland was implacable—and 'in the most irregular manner,' as Sir John declared, insisted upon another shot. To the astonishment of all, he fired quite wild. Vivian shot at random; and his bullet pierced Cleveland's heart. Cleveland sprang nearly two yards from the ground, and then fell upon his back. In a moment Vivian was at the side of his fallen antagonist; but the dying man 'made no sign'—he stared wildly, and then closed his eyes for ever!

CHAPTER VII

TRAVEL

WHEN Vivian Grey remembered his existence, he found himself in bed. The curtains of his couch were closed; but, as he stared around him, they were softly withdrawn, and a face that recalled everything to his recollection, gazed upon him with a look of affectionate anxiety.

'My father!' exclaimed Vivian—but the finger pressed on the parental lip warned him to silence. His father knelt by his side, and softly kissed his forehead, and then the curtains were again closed.

Six weeks, unconsciously to Vivian, had elapsed since

the fatal day, and he was now recovering from the effects of a fever, from which, his medical attendants had supposed he never could have escaped. And what had been the past? It did, indeed, seem like a hot and feverish dream. Here was he, once more in his own quiet room, watched over by his beloved parents; and had there then ever existed such beings as the Marquess, and Mrs. Lorraine, and Cleveland, or were they only the actors in a vision? 'It must be so,' thought Vivian; and he jumped up in his bed, and stared wildly around him. 'And yet it was a horrid dream! Murder! horrible murder!—and so real! so palpable!—I muse upon their voices, as upon familiar sounds, and I recall all the events, not as the shadowy incidents of sleep—that mysterious existence, in which the experience of a century seems caught in the breathing of a second—but as the natural, and material consequences of time and stirring life. Oh! no! it is too true!' shrieked the wretched sufferer, as his eye glanced upon a desk which was on the table, and which had been given to him by the Marquess; 'it is true! it is true! Murder! murder!' He foamed at the mouth, and sank exhausted on his pillow.

But the human mind can master many sorrows, and after a desperate relapse, and another miraculous rally, Vivian Grey rose from his bed.

'My father! I fear that I shall live!'

'*Hope*, rather, my beloved!'

'Oh! why should I hope?' and the sufferer's head sank upon his breast.

'Do not give way, my son; all will yet be well, and we shall all yet be happy,' said the father, with streaming eyes.

'Happy! oh, not in this world, my father!'

'Vivian, my dearest, your mother visited you this morning, but you were asleep. She was quite happy to find you slumbering so calmly.'

'And yet my dreams were not the dreams of joy.—Oh! my mother, you were wont to smile upon me—alas! you smiled upon your sorrow.'

‘Vivian, my beloved ! you must indeed restrain your feelings. At your age, life cannot be the lost game you think it. A little repose, and I shall yet see my boy the honour to society which he deserves to be.’

‘Alas ! my father, you know not what I feel ! The springiness of my mind has gone. Oh ! man, what a vain fool thou art ! Nature has been too bountiful to thee. She has given thee the best of friends, and thou valuest not the gift of exceeding price, until thy griefs are past even friendship’s cure. Oh ! my father ! why did I leave thee ?’ and he seized Mr. Grey’s hand with convulsive grasp.

Time flew on, even in this house of sorrow. ‘My boy,’ said Mr. Grey to his son one day, ‘your mother and I have been consulting together about you ; and we think, now that you have somewhat recovered your strength, it may be well for you to leave England for a short time. The novelty of travel will relieve your mind, without too much exciting it ; and if you can manage by the autumn, to settle down anywhere within a thousand miles of England, why we will come and join you, and you know that will be very pleasant. What say you, my boy, to this little plan ?’

In a few weeks after this proposition had been made, Vivian Grey was in Germany. He wandered for some months in that beautiful land of rivers, among which flows the Rhine, matchless in its loveliness ; and at length, the pilgrim shook the dust off his feet at Heidelberg, in which city Vivian proposed taking up his residence. It is, in truth, a place of surpassing loveliness ; where all the romantic wildness of German scenery, is blended with the soft beauty of the Italian. An immense plain, which, in its extent and luxuriance, reminds you of the most fertile tracts of Lombardy, is bordered on one side by the Bergstrasse mountains, and on the other by the range of the Vosges. Situated on the river Neckar, in a ravine of the Bergstrasse, amid mountains covered with vines, is the city of Heidelberg : its ruined

castle backing the city, and still frowning from one of the most commanding heights. In the middle of the broad plain, may be distinguished the shining spires of Mannheim, Worms, and Frankenthal; and pouring its rich stream through this luxuriant land, the beautiful and abounding Rhine receives the tribute of the Neckar. The range of the Vosges forms the extreme distance.

To the little world, of the little city, of which he was now an habitant, Vivian Grey did not appear a broken-hearted man. He lived neither as a recluse, nor a misanthrope. He became extremely addicted to field sports, especially to hunting the wild boar; for he feared nothing so much as thought, and dreaded nothing so much as the solitude of his own chamber. He was an early riser, to escape from hideous dreams; and at break of dawn, he wandered among the wild passes of the Bergstrasse; or climbing a lofty ridge, was a watcher for the rising sun; and in the evening he sailed upon the star-lit Neckar.

I fear me much, that Vivian Grey is a lost man; but, I am sure that every sweet and gentle spirit who has read this sad story of his fortunes, will breathe a holy prayer this night, for his restoration to society, and to himself.

PART II

BOOK THE FIFTH

CHAPTER I

THOU rapid AAR ! thy waves are swollen by the snows of a thousand hills—but for whom are thy leaping waters fed?—Is it for the RHINE ?

Calmly, oh ! placid NECKAR, does thy blue stream glide through thy vine-clad vales—but calmer seems thy course when it touches the rushing RHINE !

How fragrant are the banks which are cooled by thy dark-green waters, thou tranquil MAINE !—but is not the perfume sweeter of the gardens of the RHINE ?

Thou impetuous NAH ! I lingered by thine islands of nightingales, and I asked thy rushing waters why they disturbed the music of thy groves?—They told me, they were hastening to the RHINE !

Red MOSELLE ! fierce is the swell of thy spreading course—but why do thy broad waters blush when they meet the RHINE ?

Thou delicate MEUSE ! how clear is the current of thy limpid wave—as the wife yields to the husband, do thy pure waters yield to the RHINE !

And thou ! triumphant and imperial River, flushed with the tribute of these vassal streams ; thou art thyself a tributary, and hastenest even in the pride of conquest to confess thine own vassalage ! But no superior stream exults in the homage of thy servile waters : the Ocean, the eternal Ocean, alone comes forward to receive thy kiss !—not as a conqueror, but as a parent, he welcomes with proud joy his gifted child, the offspring of his honour ; thy duty—his delight ; thy tribute—thine own glory !

Once more upon thy banks, most beauteous RHINE !
In the spring-time of my youth I gazed on thee, and
deemed thee matchless. Thy vine-enamoured mountains
—thy spreading waters—thy traditionary crags—thy
shining cities—the sparkling villages of thy winding
shores—thy antique convents—thy grey and silent castles
—the purple glories of thy radiant grape—the vivid tints
of thy teeming flowers—the fragrance of thy sky—the
melody of thy birds, whose carols tell the pleasures of their
sunny woods,—are they less lovely now, less beautiful,
less sweet ?

Once more upon thy banks, most beauteous RHINE !
Since I first gazed on thee, other climes have revealed to
me their wonders, and their glory—other climes, which
Fame, perhaps, loves more ; which many deem more
beautiful—but not for a moment have I forgotten thy
varied banks, and my memory still clings to thee, thou
River of my Youth !

The keen emotions of our youth are often the occasion
of our estimating too ardently ; but the first impression
of beauty, though often overcharged, is seldom supplanted :
and as the first great author which he reads is revered
by the boy as the most immortal, and the first beautiful
woman that he meets is sanctified by him as the most
adorable ; so the impressions created upon us by those
scenes of nature which first realise the romance of our
reveries never escape from our minds, and are ever con-
secrated in our memories ;—and thus some great spirits,
after having played their part on the theatre of the world,
have retired from the blaze of courts and cities, to the
sweet seclusion of some spot, which they have accidentally
met with in the earliest years of their career.

But we are to speak of one who had retired from the
world before his time ; of one, whose early vices, and
early follies, have been already obtruded, for no unworthy
reason, on the notice of the public, in as hot and hurried
a sketch as ever yet was penned ; but like its subject ;
for what is youth but a sketch—a brief hour of principles

unsettled, passions unrestrained, powers undeveloped, and purposes unexecuted !

I am loath to speak even one moment of the author, instead of the hero ; but with respect to those who have with such singular industry associated the character of the author of Vivian Grey with that of his hero ; I must observe, that as this is an inconvenience which I share in company with more celebrated writers, so also is it one which will never prevent me from describing any character which my mind may conceive.

To those who, alike unacquainted with my person, my life, my habits, have, with that audacious accuracy for which ignorance is celebrated, not only boldly avowed that the original of my hero may be discovered in myself, but that the character, at the same time, forms also a flattering portrait of a more frail original, I shall say nothing. Most of these chattering are included in that vast catalogue of frivolous beings who carry on in society an espionage on a small scale, not precisely through malice, but from an invincible ambition of having something to say, when they have nothing to think about. A few of these persons, I am informed, cannot even plead a brainless skull as an excuse for their indecent conduct ; but dreading that in time the lash might be applied to their own guilty littleness, they have sought in the propagation of falsehood on their part, a boasted means for the prevention of further publication on mine. Unlucky rogues ! how effectual have been your exertions ! Let me not by one irritable expression console these clumsy midwives of calumny for the abortion of their slander ; but pass over their offences with that merciful silence, to which even insolent imbecility is ever entitled.

Of the personal, and political matter contained in the former books of this work, I can declare, that though written in a hasty, it was not written in a reckless spirit ; and that there is nothing contained in those volumes of which I am morally ashamed. As to the various satires in verse, and political and dramatic articles of unsuccessful

newspapers, which have been palmed, with such lavish liberality, upon myself, or upon another individual as the supposed author of this work—inasmuch, as I never wrote one single line of them, neither of the articles nor of the satires, it is unnecessary for me to apologise for their contents. They have been made the ostensible, the avowed pretext for a series of attacks, which I now, for once, notice, only to recommend them to the attentive study of those ingenious gentlemen who wish to be libellers with impunity; and who are desirous of vindicating imaginary wrongs, or maintaining a miserable existence by the publication of periodical rhapsodies, whose foul scurrility, over-wrought malice, ludicrous passion, evident mendacity, and frantic feebleness, alike exempt them from the castigation of literary notice, or the severer penalties of an outraged law.

Of the literary vices of Vivian Grey, no one is perhaps more sensible than their author. I conceived the character of a youth of great talents, whose mind had been corrupted, as the minds of many of our youth have been, by the artificial age in which he lived. The age was not less corrupted than the being it had generated. In his whole career he was to be pitied; but for his whole career he was not to be less punished. When I sketched the feelings of his early boyhood, as the novelist, I had already foreseen the results to which those feelings were to lead; and had in store for the fictitious character the punishment which he endured. I am blamed for the affectation, the flippancy, the arrogance, the wicked wit of this fictitious character. Yet was Vivian Grey to talk like Simon Pure, and act like Sir Charles Grandison?

But to our tale.—Upwards of a year had now elapsed since Vivian Grey left England. The mode of life which he pursued at Heidelberg for many months, has already been mentioned. He felt himself a broken-hearted man, and looked for death, whose delay was no blessing; but the feelings of youth which had misled him in his burning hours of joy, equally deceived him

in his days of sorrow. He lived ; and in the course of time, found each day that life was less burdensome. The truth is, that if it be the lot of man to suffer, it is also his fortune to forget. Oblivion and Sorrow share our being in much the same manner, as Darkness and Light divide the course of time. It is not in human nature to endure extremities, and sorrows soon destroy either us, or themselves. Perhaps the fate of Niobe is no fable, but a type of the callousness of our nature. There is a time in human suffering when succeeding sorrows are but like snow falling on an iceberg. It is true, that it is horrible to think that our peace of mind should arise, not from a retrospection of the past, but from a forgetfulness of it ; but, though this peace of mind is produced at the best by a mental laudanum, it is not valueless ; and Oblivion, after all, is a just judge. As we retain but a faint remembrance of our felicity, it is but fair that the smartest stroke of sorrow should, if bitter, at least be brief. But in feeling that he might yet again mingle in the world, Vivian Grey also felt that he must meet mankind with different feelings, and view their pursuits with a different interest. He woke from his secret sorrow in as changed a state of being, as the water nymph from her first embrace ; and he woke with a new possession, not only as miraculous as Undine's soul, but gained at as great a price, and leading to as bitter results. The nymph woke to new pleasures, and to new sorrows ; and innocent as an infant she deemed mankind a god, and the world a paradise. Vivian Grey discovered that this deity was but an idol of brass, and this garden of Eden but a savage waste ; for if the river nymph had gained a soul, he had gained EXPERIENCE.

EXPERIENCE-- word so lightly used, so little understood ! Experience,—mysterious spirit ! whose result is felt by all, whose nature is described by none. The father warns the son of your approach, and sometimes looks to you as his offspring's cure, and his own consolation. We hear of you in the nursery—we hear of you

in the world—we hear of you in books ; but who has recognised you until he was your subject, and who has discovered the object of so much fame, until he has kissed your chain ? To gain you is the work of all, and the curse of all ; you are at the same time necessary to our happiness, and destructive of our felicity ; you are the saviour of all things, and the destroyer of all things ; our best friend, and our bitterest enemy ; for you teach us truth, and that truth is—despair. Ye youth of England, would that ye could read this riddle !

To wake from your bright hopes, and feel that all is vanity—to be roused from your crafty plans, and know that all is worthless, is a bitter, but your sure destiny. Escape is impossible ; for despair is the price of conviction. How many centuries have fled, since Solomon, in his cedar palaces, sung the vanity of man ! Though his harp was golden, and his throne of ivory, his feelings were not less keen, and his conviction not less complete. How many sages of all nations, have, since the monarch of Jerusalem, echoed his sad philosophy ! yet the vain bubble still glitters, and still allures, and must for ever.

The genealogy of Experience is brief ; for Experience is the child of Thought, and Thought is the child of Action. We cannot learn men from books, nor can we form, from written descriptions, a more accurate idea of the movements of the human heart, than we can of the movements of nature. A man may read all his life, and form no conception of the rush of a mountain torrent, or the waving of a forest of pines in a storm ; and a man may study in his closet the heart of his fellow-creatures for ever, and have no idea of the power of ambition, or the strength of revenge.

It is when we have acted ourselves, and have seen others acting ; it is when we have laboured ourselves under the influence of our passions, and have seen others labouring ; it is when our great hopes have been attained, or have been baulked ; it is when, after having had the human heart revealed to us, we have the first opportunity

to think ; it is then, if we can think, that the whole truth lights upon us ; it is then that we ask of ourselves whether it be wise to endure such anxiety of mind, such agitation of spirit, such harrowing of the soul, to gain what may cease to interest to-morrow, or for which, at the best, a few years of enjoyment can alone be afforded ; it is then that we waken to the hollowness of all human things ; it is then that the sayings of sages, and the warnings of prophets are explained and understood ; it is then that we gain EXPERIENCE.

To deem all things vain is not the part of a disappointed man, who may feign it, but who can never feel it. To deem all things vain is the bitter portion of that mind, who, having known the world, dares to think. Experience will arise as often from satiety of joy, as from the sting of sorrow. But knowledge of the world is only an acquaintance with the powers of human passions, formed from our observation of our fellow-creatures, and of ourselves. He whose courage has been put to the test—who has relied on the love, or suffered by the hate of woman—has been deceived by man, and has deceived himself—may have as much knowledge of the world at twenty, as if he had lived a century. We may travel over the whole globe, and not gain more, although, certainly, we might have more opportunities of seeing the same farce repeated, the same game of broken promises, and baulked hopes, false expectation, and self-delusion. Few men were better acquainted with their species than Gil Blas, when he sat down at Lirias, and yet he had only travelled in two or three Spanish provinces.

Vivian Grey woke, as we have said, to a conviction of the worthlessness of human fortunes. His character was changed ; and this is the most wonderful of all revolutions—a revolution which precept or reason can never bring about, but which a change of circumstances or fortune may. In his career through the world he resembled a turbid mountain river, whose colour had been cleared, and whose course had been calmed in its passage through a lake.

But he commenced by founding his philosophy on a new error ; for he fancied himself passionless, which man never is. His trial had been severe, and because he could no longer interest himself in any of the usual pursuits of men, he believed that he could interest himself in none. But doubting of all things, he doubted of himself ; and finding himself so changed from what he had been only a year or two before, he felt as if he should not be astonished if he changed again.

With all his grief, he was no cynic—if he smiled on men, it was not in bitterness ; if he thought them base, he did not blame them. He pitied those whose baseness, in his opinion, was their sufficient punishment ; for nothing they could attain could repay them for the hot contest of their passions. Subdued, but not melancholy ; contemplative, but not gloomy ; he left his solitude. Careless of what was to come, the whole world was before him. Indifference is at least the boon of sorrow ; for none look forward to the future with indifference, who do not look back to the past with dread.

Vivian Grey was now about to join, for the second time, the great and agitated crowd of beings, who are all intent in the search after that undiscoverable talisman—HAPPINESS. That he entertained the slightest hopes of being the successful inquirer, is not for a moment to be imagined. He considered that the happiest moment in human life is exactly the sensation of a sailor who has escaped a shipwreck ; and that the mere belief that his wishes are to be indulged, is the greatest bliss enjoyed by man.

How far his belief was correct, how he prospered in this, his second venture on the great ocean of life, it is our business to relate. There were moments, when he wished himself neither experienced nor a philosopher—moments when he looked back to the lost paradise of his innocent boyhood—those glorious hours, when the unruffled river of his Life mirrored the cloudless heaven of his Hope !

CHAPTER II

VIVIAN pulled up his horse as he ascended through the fine beech wood, which leads immediately to the city of Frankfort, from the Darmstadt road. The crowd seemed to increase every moment, but as they were all hastening the same way, his progress was not much impeded. It was Frankfort fair ; and all countenances were expressive of that excitement which we always experience at great meetings of our fellow-creatures ; whether the assemblies be for slaughter, pleasure, or profit, and whether or not we ourselves join in the banquet, the battle, or the fair. At the top of the hill is an old Roman tower, and from this point the flourishing city of Frankfort, with its picturesque Cathedral, its numerous villas, and beautiful gardens in the middle of the fertile valley of the Maine, burst upon Vivian's sight. On crossing the bridge over the river, the crowd became almost impassable, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Vivian steered his way through the old narrow winding streets, full of tall ancient houses, with heavy casements and notched gable ends. These structures did not, however, at the present moment, greet the traveller with their usual sombre and antique appearance : their outside walls were in most instances, entirely covered with pieces of broadcloth of the most showy colours ; red, blue, and yellow predominating. These standards of trade were not merely used for the purpose of exhibiting the quality of the articles sold in the interior ; but, also, of informing the curious traveller, the name and nation of their adventurous owners. Inscriptions in German, French, Russian, English, Italian, and even Hebrew, appeared in striking characters on each woollen specimen ; and, as if these were not sufficient to attract the attention of the passenger, an active apprentice, or assistant, commented in eloquent terms on the peculiar

fairness and honesty of his master. The public squares, and other open spaces, and indeed every spot which was secure from the hurrying wheels of the heavy old-fashioned coaches of the Frankfort aristocracy, and the spirited pawings of their sleek and long-tailed coach horses, were covered with large and showy booths, which groaned under the accumulated treasures of all countries : French silks, and French clocks, rivalled Manchester cottons, and Sheffield cutlery ; and assisted to attract, or entrap the gazer, in company with Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, and Vienna pipeheads : here was the booth of a great bookseller, who looked to the approaching Leipsic fair for some consolation for his slow sale, and the bad taste of the people of Frankfort ; and there was a dealer in Bologna sausages, who felt quite convinced that in some things the taste of the Frankfort public was by no means to be lightly spoken of. All was bustle, bargaining, and business : there were quarrels, and conversation in all languages ; and Vivian Grey, although he had no chance either of winning or losing money, was amused.

At last, Vivian gained the High street ; and here, though the crowd was not less, the space was greater ; and so in time he arrived at the grand hotel of 'the Roman Emperor,' where he stopped. It was a long time before he could be informed whether Baron Julius von Konigstein at present honoured that respectable establishment with his presence ; for, although Vivian did sometimes succeed in obtaining an audience of a hurrying waiter, that animal, when in a hurry, has a peculiar habit of never attending to a question which a traveller addresses to him. In this dilemma Vivian was saluted by a stately-looking personage above the common height. He was dressed in a very splendid uniform of green and gold, covered with embroidery, and glittering with frogs. He wore a cocked hat, adorned with a flowing party-coloured plume, and from his broad golden belt was suspended a weapon of singular shape, and costly

workmanship. This personage was as stiff and stately, as he was magnificent. His eyes were studiously preserved from the profanation of meeting the ground, and his well supported neck seldom condescended to move from its perpendicular position. His coat was buttoned to the chin and over the breast, with the exception of one small aperture, which was elegantly filled up by a delicate white cambric handkerchief, very redolent of rich perfumes. This gorgeous gentleman, who might have been mistaken for an elector of the German empire, had the German empire been in existence, or the governor of the city at the least, turned out to be the chasseur of the Baron von Konigstein ; and with his courtly assistance, Vivian soon found himself ascending the staircase of the Roman Emperor.

Vivian was ushered into an apartment, in which he found three or four individuals at breakfast. A middle-aged man of very elegant appearance, in a most *outré* morning gown of Parisian chintz, sprang up from a many-cushioned easy-chair of scarlet morocco, and seized his hand as he was announced.

‘My dear Mr. Grey ! and so you are really kind enough to call upon me—I was so fearful lest you should not come—Eugene was so desirous that we should meet, and has said so many things of you, that I should have been mortified beyond expression if we had missed. I have left notes for you at all the principal hotels in the city. And how is Eugene ? his, is wild blood for a young student, but a good heart, an excellent heart—and you have been so kind to him !—he feels under such particular obligations to you—under very particular obligations I assure you—and will you breakfast ?—Ah ! I see you smile at my supposing a horseman unbreakfasted. And have you ridden here from Heidelberg this morning ? impossible ! Only from Darmstadt ! I thought so ! You were at the Opera then last night. And how is the little Signora ? We are to gain her, though ! trust the good people of Frankfort for that !

Pray be seated—but really I'm forgetting the commonest rules of breeding. Next to the pleasure of having friends, is that of introducing them to each other—Prince, you will have great pleasure in being introduced to my friend Mr. Grey—Mr. Grey!—Prince Salvinski! my particular friend, Prince Salvinski. The Count von Altenburgh! Mr. Grey! my very particular friend, the Count von Altenburgh—and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs! Mr. Grey! my most particular friend, the Chevalier de Bœffleurs.'

After this most hospitable reception from a man he had never seen before, Vivian Grey sat down. Baron Julius von Königstein was minister to the Diet of Frankfort, from what is termed a 'first-rate' German Power. In person he was short, but most delicately formed; his head was a little bald, but as he was only five-and-thirty, this could scarcely be from age; and his remaining hair, black, glossy, and curling, proved that their companion ringlets had not been long lost. His features were small, but not otherwise remarkable; except a pair of luscious-looking, liquid black eyes, of great size, which would have hardly become a stoic, and which gleamed with great meaning, and perpetual animation.

'I understand, Mr. Grey, that you're a regular philosopher. Pray who is the favourite master? Kant or Fichte? or is there any other new star who has discovered the origin of our essence, and proved the non-necessity of eating! Count, let me help you to a little more of these *saucisses aux choux*. I'm afraid, from Eugene's account, that you're almost past redemption; and I'm sorry to say, that although I'm very desirous of being your physician and effecting your cure, Frankfort will supply me with very few drugs to work your recovery. If you could but get me an appointment once again to your delightful London, I might indeed produce some effect; or were I even at Berlin, or at your delicious Vienna, Count Altenburgh! (the Count bowed); or at that Paradise of women,

Warsaw, Prince Salvinski!! (the Prince bowed); or at Paris!!! Chevalier (the Chevalier bowed); why then, indeed, you should have some difficulty in finding an excuse for being in low spirits with Julius von Konigstein! But, Frankfort, my dear fellow, is really the most horrible of all human places! perfectly provincial—eh! de Bœffleurs?’

‘Oh! perfectly provincial,’ sighed the French Chevalier, who was also attached to a mission in this very city, and who was thinking of his own gay Boulevards, and his brilliant Tuileries.

‘And the men, such brutes! mere citizens!’ continued the Baron, taking a long pinch of snuff,—‘mere citizens! Do you take snuff? I merely keep this box for my friends’; and here he extended to Vivian a magnificent gold snuff-box, covered with the portrait of a crowned head, surrounded with diamonds: ‘A present from the King of Sardinia, when I negotiated the marriage of the Duke of —— and his niece, and settled the long agitated controversy about the right of anchovy fishing on the left bank of the Mediterranean: I merely keep it for my friends; my *own* snuff is *here*.’ And the Baron pointed very significantly to his waist-coat-pocket, cased with tin.

‘But the women,’ continued the Baron, ‘the women—*that* is a different thing.—There’s some amusement among the little bourgeois, who are glad enough to get rid of their commercial beaus; whose small talk, after a waltz, is about bills of exchange, mixed up with a little patriotism about their free city, and some chatter about what they call—‘the fine arts’; their horrid collections of ‘the Dutch school’:—*School* forsooth! a cabbage, by Gerard Dow! and a candlestick, by Mieris!—And now will you take a basin of soup, and warm yourself, while his Highness continues his account of being frozen to death this spring at the top of Mont Blanc: how was it, Prince?’

‘I think I was at the second attempt?’ asked the

Pole, collecting himself after this long interruption.—He was, as all Poles are, a great traveller; had seen much, and described more—though a great liar, he was a dull man; and the Baron, who never allowed himself to be outdone in a good story, affected to credit the Prince's, and returned him his thanks in kind, which his Highness, in spite of his habitual mendacity on the point of his own travels, singularly enough, always credited.

‘Did your Highness ultimately ascend to the top of Mont Blanc?’ asked Vivian.

‘No——’ said the Prince very slowly, as if he confessed the fact with reluctance: ‘I did not—I certainly did not; although I did reach a much higher point than I contemplated after my repulse; a point, indeed, which would warrant some individuals in asserting that they had even reached the summit; but in matters of science I am scrupulously correct, and I certainly cannot say that I did reach the *extreme* top. I say so, because, as I believe, I mentioned before, in matters of science I make it a point to be particularly correct. It is singular, but no less true, that after reaching the fifth glacier, I encountered a pyramidal elevation of, I should calculate, fifteen hundred feet in height. This pyramidal elevation was not perpendicular, but had an unhappy inclination forward, of about one inch in eight. It was entirely of solid, green, polished ice. Nature had formed no rut to assist the philosopher.—I paused before this pyramidal elevation of polished, slippery, green ice. I was informed that it was necessary for me to ascend this pyramidal elevation during the night; and this pyramidal elevation of solid, green, polished, slippery ice, Mr. Grey, with an unhappy inclination forward, of one inch in eight from the perpendicular, was the top of Mont Blanc. Saussure may say that he ascended it for *ever*! For my part, when I beheld this pyramidal elevation, gentlemen, I was not surprised that there was some little variance as to the exact height of this mighty mountain, among all those philosophers who profess to have reached its summit.’

On this head the travelling Pole would have discoursed for ever ; but the Baron, with his usual presence of mind, dexterously interfered.

‘You were fortunate, Prince ; I congratulate you. I’ve heard of that iceberg before. I remember, my cousin, who ascended the mountain about ten years ago—was it ten years ago ?—yes, ten years ago. I remember he slept at the foot of that very pyramidal elevation, in a miserable mountain-hut, intending to climb it in the morning. He was not so well-instructed as your Highness, who, doubtless, avoided the diurnal ascent, from fear of the effect of the sun’s rays on the slippery ice. Well, my cousin, as I said before, slept in the mountain-hut ; and in the night there came such a fall of snow, that when he awoke, he found the cottage-door utterly blocked up. In fact, the whole building was encrusted in a coating of snow, of above forty feet thick. In this state of affairs, having previously made a nuncupative will, to which the guides were to be witnesses, in case of their escape, he resigned himself to his fate. But Providence interfered ; a violent tornado arose. Among other matter, the gigantic snow-ball was lifted up in the air with as much ease as if it were merely a drop of sleet. It bounded from glacier to glacier with the most miraculous rapidity, and at length vaulted on the Mer-de-glace, where it cracked into a thousand pieces. My cousin was taken up by a couple of young English ladies, who were sketching the Montanvert, with three or four of the principal glaciers for a background. The only inconveniences he sustained were a severe cold, and a slight contusion ; and he was so enchanted with the manners of the youngest lady, who, by the bye, had a very considerable fortune, that he married her the next week.’ Here the Baron took a very long pinch of snuff.

‘*Mon Dieu !*’ exclaimed the Polish Prince, who affected French manners.

‘*Mon Dieu !*’ exclaimed the Austrian Count, who was equally refined.

'*Mon Dieu !*' exclaimed the Frenchman ; who, believing his own country superior in every possible particular, was above borrowing even an oath, or an ejaculation, from another land.

'Mr. Grey—I wish that Frankfort could have been honoured by your presence yesterday,' said the Baron ; 'there really was an entertainment at the President's, which was not contemptible, and a fine display of women, a very fine display !—eh, de Boëffleurs ?'

'Remarkably so indeed ! but what a room !' said the Chevalier, shrugging up his shoulders, and elevating his eye-brows.

'We want the saloon of Wiesbaden here,' said the Baron ; 'with that, Frankfort might be endurable. As it is, I really must give up my appointment ; I cannot carry on public business in a city with such a saloon as we met in last night.'

'The most imposing room, on the whole, that I ever was in,' said Prince Salvinski, 'is the chief hall of the seraglio at Constantinople. It's a most magnificent room.'

'You have been in the interior of the seraglio then ?' asked Vivian.

'All over it, Sir, all over it ! The women unfortunately were not there ; they were at a summer palace on the Bosphorus, where they are taken regularly every year for an airing in large gold cages.'

'And was the furniture of the room you are speaking of very gorgeous ?'

'No, by no means ; a great deal of gilding and carving, but rude, rude ; very much like the exterior carving of a man-of-war ; nothing exquisite. I remember the floor was covered with carpets, which, by the bye, were English. To give you an idea of the size of the room, it might have taken, perhaps, sixty of the largest carpets that you ever saw to cover the floor of it.'

'Does your Highness take snuff ?' asked the Baron drily.

‘Thank you, no ; I’ve left off snuff ever since I passed a winter at Baffin’s Bay. You’ve no idea how very awkward an accidental sneeze is near the pole.’

‘Your Highness, I imagine, has been a great traveller,’ said Vivian, to the Baron’s great annoyance. Unfortunately Vivian was not so much used to Prince Salvinski as his Excellency.

‘I have seen a little of most countries : these things are interesting enough when we are young ; but when we get a little more advanced in life, the novelty wears off, and the excitement ceases. I have been in all quarters of the globe. In Europe I have seen everything except the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe. In Asia I have seen everything except the ruins of Babylon. In Africa, I have seen everything but Timbuctoo ; and in America, I have seen everything except Croker’s Mountains.’

All this time the Austrian had not joined in the conversation ; not, however, because his mouth was shut—that is never the fault of an Austrian. Count von Altenburgh had now, however, finished his breakfast. Next to eating, music is the business in which an Austrian is most interested. The Count having had the misfortune of destroying, for the present, one great source of his enjoyment, became very anxious to know what chance there existed of his receiving some consolation from the other. Flinging down his knife and fork, as if he estimated those instruments very slightly, now that their services were useless, and pushing his plate briskly from him, he demanded with an anxious air—‘Can any gentleman inform me what chance there is of the Signora coming ?’

‘No news to-day,’ said the Baron, with a mournful look ; ‘I’m almost in despair ;—what do you think of the last notes that have been interchanged ?’

‘Very little chance,’ said the Chevalier de Boëffleurs, shaking his head ; ‘really these burghers, with all their affected enthusiasm, have managed the business exceed-

ingly bad. No opera can possibly succeed, that is not conducted by a committee of noblemen.'

'Certainly!' said the Baron; 'we're sure then to have the best singers, and be in the Gazette the same season.'

'Which is much better, I think, von Konigstein, than paying our bills, and receiving no pleasure.'

'But these burghers,' continued the Baron; 'these clumsy burghers, with their affected enthusiasm, as you well observe, who could have contemplated such novices in diplomacy! Whatever may be the issue, I can at least lay my head upon my pillow, and feel that I have done my duty. Did not I, de Boëffleurs, first place the negotiation on a basis of acknowledged feasibility and mutual benefit? Who drew the protocol, I should like to know? Who baffled the intrigues of the English Minister, the Lord Amelius Fitz-fudge Boroughby? Who sat up one whole night with the Signora's friend, the Russian Envoy, Baron Squallonoff—and who was it that first arranged about the extra chariot?'—and here the representative of a first-rate German Power looked very much like a resigned patriot, who feels that he deserves a ribbon.

'No doubt of it, my dear von Konigstein,' echoed the French Chargé d'Affaires, 'and I think, whatever may be the result, that I too may look back to this negotiation with no ungratified feelings. Had the arrangement been left as I had wished, merely to the ministers of the Great Powers, I am confident that the Signora would have been singing this night in our Opera House.'

'What is the grand point of difference at present?' asked the Austrian.

'A most terrific one,' said the Baron; 'the lady demanded six-and-thirty covers, two tables, two carriages, one of which I arranged should be a chariot; that at least the town owes to me; and, let me see, what else? merely a town mansion and establishment. Exerting myself day and night, these terms were, at length, agreed

to by the municipality, and the lady was to ride over from Darmstadt to sign and seal. In the course of her ride, she took a cursed fancy to the country villa of a great Jew banker, and since that moment the arrangement has gone off. We have offered her everything—the commandant's country castle—his lady's country farm—the villa of the director of the Opera—the retreat of our present prima donna—all, all in vain. We have even hinted at a temporary repose in a neighbouring royal residence—but all, all useless. The banker and the Signora are equally intractable, and Frankfort is in despair.'

'She ought to have signed and sealed at Darmstadt,' said the Count very indignantly.

'To be sure!—they should have closed upon her caprice, and taken her when she was in the fancy.'

'Talking of Opera girls,' commenced the Polish Prince, 'I remember the Countess Katszinski——'

'Your Highness has nothing upon your plate,' quickly retorted the Baron, who was in no humour for a story.

'Nothing more, I thank you,' continued the Prince: 'as I was saying, I remember the Countess Katszinski——'

'Mr. Brinkel!' announced the Chasseur; and the entrance of a very singular-looking personage saved the company from the Pole's long story.

Mr. Brinkel was a celebrated picture-dealer. He was a man about the middle size, with keen black eyes, a sharp nose rather unduly inclining to his right cheek, and which somewhat singular contortion was, perhaps, occasioned by an habitual and sardonic grin which constantly illuminated his features, and lit up his shining dark brown face, which was of much the same tint as one of his own varnished, 'deep-toned' modern antiques. There were odd stories about, respecting Mr. Brinkel, and his 'undoubted originals,' in which invaluable pieces of property he alone professed to deal. But the Baron von Konigstein was, at any rate, not one of Mr. Brinkel's victims; and his Excellency was among the

rare few, whom a picture-dealer knows it is in vain to attempt to take in : he was an amateur who thoroughly understood art, one of the rarest characters in existence. The Baron and Brinkel were, however, great friends ; and at the present moment the picture-dealer was assisting the diplomatist in the accomplishment of a very crafty and splendid plan. Baron von Konigstein, for various reasons, which shall now be nameless, was generally in want of money. Now the Baron, tired with his perpetual shifts, determined to make a fortune at one great coup. He had been in England, and was perfectly aware of the rising feeling for the arts which at the present moment daily flourishes in this country. The Baron was generous enough to determine materially to assist in the formation of our national taste. He was, himself, forming at a cheap rate a very extensive collection of original pictures, which he intended to sell at an enormous price, to the National Gallery. Brinkel, in order to secure the *entrée* of the Baron's room, which afforded various opportunities of getting off his 'undoubted' originals on English and Russian travellers, was in return assisting the minister in his great operation, and acted as his general agent in the affair, on which he was also to get a respectable commission. This business was, of course, altogether a close secret.

And now, before Mr. Brinkel opens his mouth, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a few words upon a subject, in which we are all interested. We are now forming, at great expense, and with greater anxiety, a National Gallery. What is the principal object of such an Institution ? Doubtless to elevate the productions of our own school, by affording our artists an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the works of the great masters who have preceded them. Why, then, have we deviated from the course which has been pursued in the formation of all other National Galleries ? There we shall see arranged in chronological order, specimens of the art in all ages, from the period in which Cimabue rescued it

from the Greek painters, unto the present time. The excellent is doubtless to be conceived in the study of the excellent ; but we should always remember, that excellence is relative ; and that to the philosopher, the frescos of Masaccio are perhaps more marvellous than the frescos of the Vatican. Introduce a young and inexperienced painter to the Assumption of Titian, the Madonna della Pietà of Guido, the Leo of Raffael, the St. Jerome of Domenichino ; and, instead of being incited and inspired, he will leave the chamber in despair. But, before he witnesses these miracles, let him trace on the walls of the gallery, the history of his art. Let him view the first hazardous efforts of the inexperienced, wavering, and timid pencil, depicting mummies, rather than men—sticks, rather than trees : let him view the unrelieved surface—the ill-proportioned extremities—the harsh and unsubdued tints ; then let him watch perspective, stealing into the background ; let him witness the attenuated forms falling into graceless, but energetic groups ; let him admire the first deception of chiaro 'scuro ; then bring him to the correct design, the skilful foreshortening, the exact extremities ; to the rounded limb—to the breathing mouth—to the kindled eye—to the moving group ! Add to these all the magic of colour, and lo ! a grand picture. We stand before the work with admiring awe ; forgetting the means in the result ; the artist, in the creator.

Thus gradually, I repeat, should our young artist be introduced to the great masters, whom then the wise pride of human nature would incite him to imitate. Then too, he would feel that to become a great artist, he must also become a great student ; that no sudden inspiration produced the virgins of Raffael ; that, by slow degrees, by painful observation, by diligent comparison, by frequent experiment, by frequent failure, by the experience of many styles, the examination of all schools, the scholar of Perugino won for himself a name, than which no one is more deeply graven on Fame's eternal tablets.

For half the sum that we are giving for a suspicious

Corregio, the young English artist would be able to observe all this, and the efforts of the early Germans to boot. I make these observations with no disposition to disparage the management of our gallery; nor in that carping humour, which some think it safe to assume, when any new measure is proposed, or is being carried into execution. I know the difficulties that the Directors have to contend with. I know the greater difficulties that await them; and I have made these observations, because I believe there is a due disposition, in the proper quarter, to attend to honest suggestions; and because I feel, that the true interests of the Arts, have, at this present time, in our Monarch, a steady, a sincere, and powerful advocate; one, who in spite of the disheartening opposition of vulgar clamour, and uneducated prejudice, has done more in a short reign for the patronage of the fine Arts, than all the dynasties of all the Medicis, Roman and Florentine, together. And now for Mr. Brinkel.

‘My dear Baron!’ commenced the picture-dealer; and here seeing strangers he pulled up, in order to take a calm view of the guests, and see whether there were any unpleasant faces among them; any gentleman to whom he had sold a Leonardo da Vinci, or a Salvator Rosa. All looking very strange, and extremely amiable, Mr. Brinkel felt reassured and proceeded.

‘My dear Baron! merely a few words.’

‘Oh, my dear Brinkel!—proceed—proceed.’

‘Another time; your Excellency is engaged at present.’

‘My dear Brinkel! before these gentlemen you may say anything.’

‘Your Excellency’s so kind!’ continued Mr. Brinkel, though with a hesitating voice, as if he thought that when the nature of the communication was known, the Baron might repent his over confidence. ‘Your Excellency’s so kind!’

‘My dear little Rembrandt, you may really say *anything*.’

‘Well then,’ continued he, half hesitating, and half in a whisper; ‘may it please your Excellency, I merely

stepped in to say, that I am secretly, but credibly informed, that there is a man just arrived from Italy, with a marble Pietà of Michel Angelo, stolen from a church in Genoa. The fact is not yet known, even to the police ; and long before the Sardinian minister can apply for the acquirer's apprehension, he will be safely stowed in one of my cellars.'

'A marble Pietà ! by Michel Angelo,' exclaimed the Prince, with great eagerness. The Polish nobleman had a commission from the imperial Viceroy of his country, to make purchases of all exquisite specimens of art that he could meet with ; as the Imperial Government was very desirous of reforming the taste of the nation in matters of art, which indeed was in a particularly depraved state. Caricatures had been secretly circulated in the highest circles of Warsaw and Wilna, in which the Emperor and his ministers did not look quite as dignified as when shrouded in the sacred sanctuary of the Kremlin ; and although the knout, the wheel, and Siberia, suppressed these little intemperances for the moment, still it was imagined by the prime minister, who chanced to be a philosopher, that the only method of permanent prevention was directing the public taste to the study of the beautiful ; and that therefore the only mode of saving the Sovereign from being squibbed, was the formation of a national gallery. Ours therefore is not the only infant institute.

'A marble Pietà, by Michel Angelo !' exclaimed the Prince ; 'but a great price, I suppose, demanded ?'

'Dear—but cheap' ; oracularly answered Mr. Brinkel ; and the sinistral fore-finger was significantly applied to the left side of his nose.

'I confess I am no extravagant admirer of Michel Angelo,' said the Baron. 'In the sacred shades of Santa Croce, Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture mourn him as their lost master. Poetry might have been added to the charming Sisters. But in all these glorious arts, though his performances were remarkable, they were not miraculous ; and I look in vain for any production of Michel Angelo, which *per se* stamps him as a master spirit.

‘It was his custom to treat sculpture as his profession, and in his profession he has left scarcely one finished work. The tombs of the Medicis are not completed, and although there is a mysterious and undefinable moral in his “Night and Day,” which may attract the contemplative, and interest the poet, yet I imagine few, who have preconceived that monument from the written descriptions, have looked on the original without disappointment. His Moses, —and for a moment I will grant that the legislator is as sublime as his warmest admirers maintain,—is only one finished figure of a monument, in which it was to have been not the most remarkable. But what, if this statue be only a kindred personification of the same conception which he has depicted in the brawny prophets of the Sistine chapel, where it would seem that the artist had mistaken contortion for inspiration, and largeness of stature for dilation of soul! His marble Pietàs and Madonnas unfinished, abound in the Italian churches; and though I grant a striking simplicity is often observable in the countenances of his virgins, yet that simplicity is often severe, and sometimes sullen. We look in vain for the subdued loveliness of the mother of God—for that celestial resignation which is not akin to despair. As for the corpse, it might suit the widow’s child, or the deceased Lazarus; and if not always absolutely vulgar, the face is at best but that of a young, and not very intellectual Rabbi. If we turn from sacred subjects to ancient mythology, I cannot forget that Michel Angelo was the first artist, who dared to conceive a god as less than a man; and in his “Drunken Bacchus,” presented us with the sovereign of the grape, as the slave of his own subject, in a position too clumsy for a Faun, and too dull for a Silenus!

‘Although sculpture was the profession of Michel Angelo, he is still more esteemed by his admirers as a painter. Notwithstanding Sir Joshua Reynolds ranks him even above Raffael, it seems now pretty well understood that his fame as a painter must depend upon his

Roman frescos, and his *one* oil painting—the Holy Family at Florence. Whether this painting really be in oil is doubtful, but that is of little moment. I will only ask, what mind unprejudiced by the doctrines, and uncontaminated by the babble of schools, has looked upon that boasted treasure of the Tribune, with any other feeling except disgust? Where is the divinity of the boy? Where the inspiration of the mother? Where the proud felicity of the human husband?

‘Of fresco-painting, Michel Angelo was confessedly ignorant, and once threw down the brush in disgust at his own incompetence. The theorist of art still finds some plan, and order, lurking in the inexplicable arrangement of the Sistine ceiling; but while he consoles himself for the absence of the more delightful effects of art, by conjuring up a philosophical arrangement of the prophets, and a solution of the dark mysteries of theocracy, he turns in silence from the walls, gloomy with the frightless purgatory, and the unexhilarating paradise of “The Last Judgment”; where the Gothic conceptions of the middle ages are again served up in the favourite temple of modern Rome, and in a manner in which crude composition seems only to be exceeded by confused arrangement—in which the distracted eye turns to a thousand points, and is satisfied by none—wearied with tints, which though monotonous, are not subdued, and which possessing none of the attractions of colour, seem cursed with all its faults.

‘Michel Angelo was not educated as an architect; but an Italian, and a man of genius, may become a great architect, even without an education. Let us briefly examine his works. The domestic architecture of Florence is due to him; and if we complain of palaces, which look like prisons, and lament the perpetual presence of rustic bossages, we are told that the plans of Michel Angelo were dictated by the necessities of the times; and that, in his age, it was absolutely requisite that every palace should be prepared to become a fortress. If this be admitted as a valid excuse for the absence of beauty, it is

against all principles of logic, that, because in these structures beauty was incompatible with safety, Michel Angelo could therefore have conceived the beautiful. In the chapel of the Medicis, we in vain look for the master ; —where is that happy union of the sciences of the harmony of proportion, and the harmony of combination, which mark the great architect ! where the harmonious whole consisting of parts beautiful in detail, and unobtrusive in effect ! We see only a dungeon, at once clumsy and confined.

‘If we turn from Florence to Rome, who is there to defend the complexities of the Capitoline Galleries, and the absurdities of the Porta Pia ? We approach St. Peter’s : —although the work of many artists, the design of Michel Angelo has, on the whole, been very faithfully adhered to. That St. Peter’s is magnificent, who can deny ? —but how could such a mass of stone, and masonry, and architectural embellishment, such a blaze of gilding, marbles, and mosaics, be otherwise than magnificent ? We must not be deceived by the first impression of a general effect which could not be avoided. It is acknowledged that this church, which is the largest in Christendom ; which required so many years for its erection ; which exhausted the Papal treasures, and endangered the Papal dominion ; affects the mind of the entering stranger, neither with its sublimity, nor its grandeur ; and presents no feature which would lead him to suppose, that he was standing in the most celebrated temple in Europe. All our travellers and writers, who have alike experienced disappointment on entering this famous building, have attempted to account for this effect, by attributing the cause to the exactness of the proportions. But this is like excusing a man’s ignorance, by assuring you that he has received a regular education. If exactness of proportion produce poverty of effect, exactness of proportion ceases to be a merit ; but is this true ? What lover of Palladio can deny that it is the business of the great architect to produce striking and chaste effects, from

poor and limited materials ; and that exactness of proportion satisfying the mind, and not forcing it to ask for *more*, does in fact make that which is less appear greater, and that which is great, immense.

‘ But if I mention the faults of Michel Angelo, I am bid to remember the early period of art in which he lived ; I am reminded of the mean elevations of those who preceded him—of the tone which he gave to the conceptions of his successors. Yet many celebrated sculptors were his contemporaries, and surely Leonardo da Vinci was not the scholar of his genius. But in painting, especially, he was preceded by Fra Bartolomeo, a miraculous artist ; —who, while in his meek Madonnas he has only been equalled by Raffael, has produced in his St. Mark—his Job—and his Isaiah—creations which might have entitled him to the panegyrics which Posterity has so liberally bestowed upon the sculptor of Moses, and the painter of the Sistine Chapel.

‘ In architecture, I will not notice Brunelleschi ; but let me mention this astonishing fact :—San Michele was born only nine or ten years after Michel Angelo, and as he died a few years before him, may be considered his exact contemporary. While the chapel of the Medicis was erected at Florence, at Verona, in the chapel of the Pellegrini, San Michele was reproducing ancient beauty, in combinations unknown to the antique. While the barbaric absurdities of the Porta Pia disgraced the capital of the Papal state, San Michele produced in the Porta Stupa a structure worthy of ancient Rome. And while Michel Angelo was raising palaces for his Florentine contemporaries, whose dark and rugged elevations are to be excused, on account of the necessity of their being impregnable to the assaults of popular tumult, the streets of Verona, the constant seat of sedition, were filling under the direction of San Michele, with numberless palaces, which, while they defended their owners alike among the dangers of civil broils and foreign invasion, at the same time presented elevations which, for their varied

beauty, and classic elegance, have only been equalled by Palladio !’

Nothing is more delightful than to hear the sound of our own voice. The Baron’s lecture was rather long, but certainly unlike most other lecturers, he understood his subject. Before Vivian could venture an observation in defence of the great Florentine, the door opened, and Ernstorff handed a dispatch to the Baron, recommending it to his Excellency’s particular attention.

‘Business, I suppose,’ said the Plenipotentiary : ‘it may wait till to-morrow.’

‘From M. Clarionet, your Excellency.’

‘From M. Clarionet !’ eagerly exclaimed the Baron, and tore open the epistle. ‘Gentlemen ! gentlemen ! gentlemen ! congratulate me—congratulate yourselves—congratulate Frankfort—such news—it is really too much for me,’ and the diplomatist, overcome, leant back in his chair.—‘She is ours, Salvinski ! she is ours, von Altenburgh ! she is ours, my dear de Boëffleurs ! Grey, you’re the happiest fellow in Christendom ; the Signora has signed and sealed—all is arranged—she sings to-night ! What a fine spirited body is this Frankfort municipality ! what elevation of soul ! what genuine enthusiasm !—eh ! de Boëffleurs !’

‘Most genuine !’ exclaimed the Chevalier, who hated German music with all his heart, and was now humming an air from the Dame Blanche.

‘But mind, my dear fellows—this is a secret, a cabinet secret—the municipality are to have the gratification of announcing the event to the city in a public decree—it is but fair. I feel that I have only to hint, to secure your silence.’

At this moment, with a thousand protestations of secrecy, the party broke up, each hastening to have the credit of first spreading the joyful intelligence through their circles, and of depriving the Frankfort senate of their hard-earned gratification. The Baron, who was in high spirits, ordered the carriage to drive Vivian round the

ramparts, where he was to be introduced to some of the most fashionable beauties, previous to the evening triumph. Mr. Brinkel, disappointed at present of increasing, through the assistance of the Polish Prince, any collection in the North, directed his subtle steps up another flight of the staircase of the Roman Emperor, where lodged an English gentleman, for whom Mr. Brinkel had a very exquisite *morçeau* ; having received the night before from Florence a fresh consignment of Carlo Dolces.

CHAPTER III

VIVIAN passed a week very agreeably at Frankfort. In the Baron and his friends he found the companions that he had need of ; their conversation and pursuits diverted his mind without engaging his feelings, and allowed him no pause to think. There were moments, indeed, when he found in the Baron a companion neither frivolous nor uninteresting. His Excellency had travelled in most countries, and had profited by his travels. His taste for the fine arts was equalled by his knowledge of them ; and his acquaintance with many of the most eminent men of Europe enriched his conversation with a variety of anecdotes, to which his lively talents did ample justice. He seemed fond, at times, of showing Vivian that he was not a mere artificial man of the world, destitute of all feelings, and thinking only of himself : he recurred with satisfaction to moments of his life, when his passions had been in full play ; and, while he acknowledged the errors of his youth with candour, he excused them with grace. In short, Vivian and he became what the world calls *friends* ; that is to say, they were men who had no objection to dine in each other's company, provided the dinner were good ; assist each other in any scrape, provided no particular personal responsibility were incurred by the

assistant ; and live under the same roof, provided each were master of his own time. Vivian and the Baron, indeed, did more than this—they might have been described as *very particular friends*—for his Excellency had persuaded our hero to accompany him for the summer to the Baths of Ems, a celebrated German watering-place, situated in the duchy of Nassau, in the vicinity of the Rhine.

On the morrow they were to commence their journey. The fair of Frankfort, which had now lasted nearly a month, was at its close. A bright sunshiny afternoon was stealing into twilight, when Vivian escaping from the principal street, and the attractions of the Braunfels, or chief shops under the Exchange, directed his steps to some of the more remote and ancient streets. In crossing a little square, his attention was excited by a crowd, which had assembled round a conjuror ; who from the top of a small cart, which he had converted into a stage, was haranguing, in front of a green curtain, an audience with great fervency, and apparently with great effect ; at least Vivian judged so, from the loud applauses which constantly burst forth. The men pressed nearer, shouted, and clapped their hands ; and the anxious mothers struggled to lift their brats higher in the air, that they might early form a due conception of the powers of magic ; and learn that the maternal threats which were sometimes extended to them at home, were not mere idle boasting. Altogether the men with their cocked hats, stiff holiday coats, and long pipes ; the women with their glazed gowns of bright fancy patterns, close lace caps, or richly chased silver headgear ; and the children with their gaping mouths and long heads of hair, offered very quaint studies for a Flemish painter. Vivian became also one of the audience, and not, an uninterested one.

The appearance of the conjuror was very peculiar. He was not much more than five feet high, but so slightly formed, that he reminded you rather of the

boy, than the dwarf. The upper part of his face was even delicately moulded; his sparkling black eyes became his round forehead, which was not too much covered by his short glossy black hair; his complexion was clear, but quite olive; his nose was very small and straight, and contrasted singularly with his enormous mouth, the thin bluish lips of which were seldom closed, and consequently did not conceal his large square teeth, which, though very white, were set apart, and were so solid that they looked almost like double teeth. This enormous mouth, which was supported by large jaw-bones, attracted the attention of the spectator so keenly that it was some time before you observed the prodigious size of the ears, which also adorned this extraordinary countenance. The costume of this singular being was not less remarkable than his natural appearance. He wore a complete under-dress of pliant leather, which fitted close up to his throat, and down to his wrists and ankles, where it was clasped with large fastenings either of gold or some gilt material. This, with the addition of a species of hussar jacket of green cloth, which was quite unadorned, with the exception of its vivid red lining, was the sole covering of the conjuror; who, with a light cap and feather in his hand, was now haranguing the spectators. The object of his discourse was a panegyric of himself, and a satire on all other conjurors. He was the only conjuror—the real conjuror—a worthy descendant of the magicians of old.

‘Were I to tell that broad-faced Heer,’ continued the conjuror, ‘who is now gaping opposite to me, that this rod is the rod of Aaron, mayhap he would call me a liar; yet were I to tell him that he was the son of his father, he would not think it wonderful! And yet, can he prove it? My friends, if I am a liar, the whole world is a liar—and yet any one of you who’ll go and proclaim that on the Braunfels, will get his skull cracked. Every truth is not to be spoken, and every lie is not to be punished. I’ve told you that it’s better

for you to spend your money in seeing my tricks, than it is in swigging schnaps in the chimney corner ; and yet, my friends, this may be a lie. I've told you that the profits of this whole night shall be given to some poor and worthy person in this town ; and perhaps I shall give them to myself. What then ! I shall speak the truth ; and you will perhaps crack my skull. Is this a reward for truth ? Oh, generation of vipers ! My friends, what is truth ? who can find it in Frankfort ? Suppose I call upon you, Mr. Baker, and sup with you this evening ; you will receive me as a neighbourly man should, tell me to make myself at home, and do as I like. Is it not so ? I see you smile, as if my visit would make you bring out one of the bottles of your best Asmannshauser !'

Here the crowd laughed out ; for we are always glad when there is any talk of another's hospitality being put to the test, although we stand no chance of sharing in the entertainment ourselves. The baker looked foolish, as all men singled out in a crowd do.

'Well, well,' continued the conjuror ; 'I've no doubt his wine would be as ready as your tobacco, Mr. Smith ; or a wafila from your basket, my honest Cake-seller ;' and so saying, with a peculiarly long thin wand, the conjuror jerked up the basket of an itinerant and shouting Pastry-cook, and immediately began to thrust the contents into his mouth with a rapidity ludicrously miraculous. The laugh now burst out again, but the honest baker joined in it this time with an easy spirit.

'Be not disconcerted, my little custard-monger ; if thou art honest, thou shalt prosper. Did I not say that the profits of this night were for the most poor, and the most honest ? If thy stock in trade were in thy basket, my raspberry-puff, verily you are not now the richest here ; and so, therefore, if your character be a fair one—that is to say, if you only cheat five times a-day, and give a tenth of your cheatery to the poor, you shall have

the benefit. I ask you again, what is truth? If I sup with the baker, and he tells me to do what I like with all that is his, and I kiss his wife, he will kick me out; yet to kiss his wife might be my pleasure, if her breath were sweet. I ask you again, what is truth? Truth they say lies in a well; but perhaps this is a lie. How do we know that truth is not in one of these two boxes?' asked the conjuror, placing his cap on his head, and holding one small snuff-box to a tall savage-looking one-eyed Bohemian, who, with a comrade, had walked over from the Austrian garrison at Mentz.

'I see but one box,' growled the soldier.

'It is because thou hast only one eye, friend; open the other, and thou shalt see two,' said the conjuror, in a slow malicious tone, with his neck extended, and his hand with the hateful box outstretched in it.

'Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, I'll soon stop thy prate, chitterling!' bellowed the enraged Bohemian.

'Murder! murder! murder!—the protection of the free city against the Emperor of Austria, the King of Bohemia, Hungary, and Lombardy!' and the knave retreated to the very extremity of the stage, and affecting the most agitating fear, hid himself behind the green curtain, from a side of which his head was alone visible, or rather an immense red tongue, which wagged in all shapes at the unlucky soldier, except when it retired to the interior of his mouth, to enable him to reiterate '*Murder!*' and invoke the privileges of the free city of Frankfort.

When the soldier was a little cooled, the conjuror again came forward; and, having moved his small magical table to a corner, and lit two tapers, one of which he placed at each side of the stage, he stripped off his hussar jacket, and began to imitate a monkey; an animal which, by the faint light, in his singular costume, he very much resembled. How amusing were his pranks! He first plundered a rice plantation, and then he cracked cocoa-nuts; then he washed his face, and

arranged his toilet with his right paw ; and finally he ran a race with his own tail, which humorous appendage to his body was very wittily performed for the occasion, by a fragment of an old tarred rope. His gambols were so diverting, that they even extracted applause from his enemy the one-eyed sergeant ; and, emboldened by the acclamations, from monkeys the conjuror began to imitate men. He first drank like a Dutchman, and having reeled round with a thousand oaths to the manifold amusement of the crowd, he suddenly began to smoke like a Prussian. Nothing could be more admirable than the look of complacent and pompous stolidity with which he accompanied each puff of his cigar. The applause was continued ; and the one-eyed Bohemian sergeant, delighted at the ridicule which was heaped on his military rival, actually threw the mimic some groschen.

‘Keep your pence, friend,’ said the conjuror ; ‘you’ll soon owe me more ; we have not yet closed accounts. My friends, I have drank like a Dutchman ; I have smoked like a Prussian ; and now—I will eat like an Austrian !’—and here the immense mouth of the actor seemed distended even a hundred degrees bigger, while with gloating eyes and extended arms, he again set to at the half-emptied wafila basket of the unhappy pastry-cook.

‘Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, thou art an impudent varlet !’ growled the Austrian soldier.

‘You are losing your temper again,’ retorted the glutton, with his mouth full ; ‘how difficult you are to please !—Well, then, if the Austrians may not be touched, what say you to a Bohemian—a tall one-eyed Bohemian sergeant, with an appetite like a hog, and a liver like a lizard ?’

‘Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, this is too much !’ and the frantic soldier sprang at the conjuror.

‘Hold him ! hold him !’ cried Vivian Grey ; for the mob, frightened at the soldier, gave way.

‘There is a gentle voice under a dark cloak!’ cried the conjuror; ‘but I want no assistance’; and so saying, with a dexterous spring, the conjuror leapt over the heads of two or three staring children, and lighted on the nape of the sergeant’s gigantic neck; placing his forefingers behind each of the soldier’s ears, he threatened to slit them immediately, if he were not quiet. The sergeant’s companion, of course, came to his rescue, but Vivian engaged him, and attempted to arrange matters. ‘My friends, my friends, surely a gay word at a *kermis* is not to meet with military punishment! What is the use of living in the free city of Frankfort, or, indeed, in any other city, if jokes are to be answered with oaths, and a light laugh met with a heavy blow? Avoid bloodshed, if possible; but stand by the conjuror. His business is gibes and jests, and this is the first time that I ever saw Merry Andrew arrested. Come, come, my good fellows!’ said he to the soldiers, ‘we had better be off: men so important as you and I should not be spectators of these mummeries.’ The Austrians, who understood Vivian’s compliment literally, were not sorry to make a dignified retreat; particularly as the mob, encouraged by Vivian’s interference, began to show fight. Vivian also took his departure as soon as he could possibly steal off unnoticed; but not before he had been thanked by the conjuror.

‘I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak! If you like to see the Mystery of the Crucifixion, with the Resurrection, and real fireworks, it begins at eight o’clock, and you shall be admitted gratis. I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak, and some day or other, when your Highness is in distress, you shall not want the aid of ESSPER GEORGE!’

CHAPTER IV

IT was late in the evening, when a britchka stopped at the post-house of Coblentz. M. Maas, whom all English travellers must remember, for all must have experienced his genuine kindness, greeted its two inmates with his usual hospitality ; but regretted that, as his house was very full, his Excellency must have the condescension to sup in the public room. The passage-boat from Bingen had just arrived ; and a portly judge from the Danube, a tall, gaunt Prussian officer, a sketching English artist, two University students, and three or four travelling cloth-merchants, chiefly returning from Frankfort-fair, were busily occupied at a long table in the centre of the room, at an ample banquet, in which sour-cROUT, cherry soup, and very savory sausages were not wanting. So keen were the appetites, and so intense the attention of these worthies, that the entrance of the newcomers was scarcely noticed ; and the Baron and his friend seated themselves very quietly at a small table in the corner of the room, where they waited with due patience for the arrival of one of Monsieur Maas' exquisite little suppers ; although hunger, more than once, nearly induced them to join the table of the boat's-crew ; but as the Baron facetiously observed, a due terror of the Prussian officer, who, the moment they arrived, took care to help himself to every dish at table, and a proper respect for Ernstorff prevented a consummation which they devoutly wished for.

For half an hour nothing was heard but the sound of crashing jaws, and of rattling knives and forks. How singular is the sight of a dozen hungry individuals intent upon their prey ! what a noisy silence ! A human voice was at length heard. It proceeded from the fat judge from the Danube. He was a man at once convivial, dignified, and economical : he had not spoke for two

minutes before his character was evident to every person in the room, although he flattered himself that his secret purpose was concealed from all. Tired with the thin Moselle which M. Maas gratuitously allowed to the table, the convivial judge from the Danube wished to comfort himself with a glass of more generous liquor ; aware of the price of a bottle of good Rüdesheimer, the economical judge from the Danube was desirous of forming a co-partnership with one or two gentlemen in the bottle ; still more aware of his exalted situation, the dignified judge from the Danube felt it did not become him to appear in the eyes of any one as an unsuccessful suppliant.

‘This Moselle is very thin,’ observed the judge, shaking his head.

‘Very fair table-wine, I think,’ said the artist, refilling his tumbler, and then proceeding with his sketch, which was a rough likeness, in black chalk, of the worthy magistrate himself.

‘Very good wine, I think,’ swore the Prussian, taking the bottle. With the officer there was certainly no chance.

The cloth-merchants mixed even this thin Moselle with water, and therefore they could hardly be looked to as boon companions ; and the students were alone left. A German student is no flincher at the bottle, although he generally drinks beer. These gentry, however, were no great favourites with the magistrate, who was a loyal man, of regular habits, and no encourager of brawls, duels, and other still more disgraceful outrages ; to all which abominations, besides drinking beer and chewing tobacco, the German student is most remarkably addicted : but in the present case, what was to be done ? He offered the nearest a pinch of snuff, as a mode of commencing his acquaintance, and cultivating his *complaisance*. The German student dug his thumb into the box, and with the additional aid of the fore-finger sweeping out half its contents, growled out something like thanks, and

then drew up in his seat, as if he had too warmly encouraged the impertinent intrusion of a Philistine, to whom he had never been introduced.

The cloth-merchant ceasing from sipping his meek liquor, and taking out of his pocket a letter, from which he tore off the back, carefully commenced collecting with his fore-finger the particles of dispersed snuff in a small pyramid, which, when formed, was dexterously slid into the paper, then folded up and put into his pocket; the prudent merchant contenting himself for the moment with the refreshment which was afforded to his senses by the truant particles which had remained in his nail.

‘Kellner!’—never call a German waiter *Garçon*, or else you’ll stand a chance of going supperless to-bed;—‘Kellner! a bottle of Rudesheimer!’ bellowed the convivial judge from the Danube; ‘and if any gentleman or gentlemen would like to join me, they may’; added the economical judge from the Danube, in a more subdued tone. No one answered, and the bottle was put down. The judge slowly poured out the bright yellow fluid into a tall bell glass, adorned with a beautiful and encircling wreath of vine leaves: he held the glass a moment before the lamp, for his eye to dwell with still greater advantage on the transparent radiancy of the contents; and then deliberately pouring them down his throat, and allowing them to dwell a moment on his palate, he uttered an emphatic ‘*bah!*’ and sucking in his breath, leant back in his chair. The student immediately poured out a glass from the same bottle, and drank it off. The dignified judge from the Danube gave him a look;—the economical judge from the Danube blessed himself that though his boon companion was a brute, still he would lessen the expense of the bottle, which nearly amounted to a day’s pay; and the convivial judge from the Danube again filled his glass—but this was merely to secure his fair portion. He saw the student was a rapid drinker; and, although he did not like to hurry his own enjoyment, he

thought it most prudent to keep his glass well stored by his side.

‘I hope your Highnesses have had a pleasant voyage,’ halloed out a man, entering the room very rapidly as he spoke; and deliberately walking up to the table, he pushed between two of the cloth-merchants, who quietly made way; and then placing a small square box before him, he immediately opened it, and sweeping aside all the dishes and glasses which surrounded him, he began to fill their places with cups, balls, rings, and other mysterious-looking matters, which generally accompany a conjuror.

‘I hope your Highnesses have had a pleasant voyage. I’ve been thinking of you all the day. (Here the cups were arranged.) Next to myself, I’m interested for my friends. (Here the rice was sprinkled.) I came from Fairy-land this morning. (Here the trick was executed.) Will any gentleman lend me a handkerchief? Now, Sir, tie any knot you choose:—tighter—tighter—tight as you can—tight as you can:—now pull!—Why, Sir, where’s your knot?’ Here most of the company good-naturedly laughed at a trick which had amused them before a hundred times. But the dignified judge from the Danube had no taste for such trivial amusements; and, besides, the convivial judge from the Danube thought that all this noise spoilt the pleasure of his wine, and prevented him from catching the flavour of his Rudesheimer. Moreover, the judge from the Danube was not in a very good humour. The German student appeared to have very little idea of the rules and regulations of a fair partnership; for not only did he not regulate his draughts by the moderate example of his bottle companion, but actually filled the glass of his University friend, and even offered the precious green flask to his neighbour, the cloth-merchant. That humble individual modestly refused the proffer. The very unexpected circumstance of having his health drank by a stranger seemed alone to have produced a great impression upon him; and adding

a little more water to his already diluted potation, he bowed most reverently to the student, who, in return, did not notice him. All these little circumstances prevented the judge from the Danube from being in his usual condescending and amiable humour, and therefore the judge from the Danube did not laugh at the performances of our friend Essper George : for I need hardly mention that the conjuror was no other than that quaint personage. His ill-humour did not escape the lord of the cups and balls ; who, as was his custom, immediately began to torment him.

‘Will your Highness choose a card?’ asked the magician of the judge, with a most humble look.

This was too much for the magistrate.

‘No, Sir!’

Essper George looked very penitent, as if he felt he had taken a great liberty by his application ; and so to compensate for his incorrect behaviour, he asked the magistrate whether he would have the goodness to lend him his watch. The judge was very irate, and determined to give the intruder a set down.

‘No, Sir ; I am not one of those who can be amused by tricks that his grandfather knew.’

‘Grandfather!’ shrieked Essper ; ‘what a wonderful grandfather yours must have been ! All my tricks are fresh from Fairy-land this morning. Grandfather, indeed ! Pray, is this your grandfather?’ and here the conjuror, leaning over the table, with a rapid catch drew out from the fat paunch of the judge, a long, grinning wooden figure, with great staring eyes, and the parrot nose of a pulcinello. The laugh which followed this humorous specimen of sleight-of-hand was loud, long, and universal. The judge lost his temper ; and Essper George took the opportunity of the confusion to drink off the glass of Rudesheimer, which stood, as we have mentioned, ready-charged at the magistrate’s elbow.

The keller now went round to collect the money of

the various guests who had partaken of the boat-supper ; and, of course, charged the judge extra for his ordered bottle, bowing at the same time very low, as was proper to so good a customer. These little attentions at inns encourage expenditure. The judge tried at the same time the bottle, which he found empty, and applied to his two boon companions for their quota ; but the students affected a sort of brutal surprise at any one having the presumption to imagine that they were going to pay their proportion ; and flinging down the money for their own supper on the table, they retired ; the frantic magistrate, calling loudly for M. Maas, followed them out of the room.

Essper George stood moralising at the table, and emptying every glass whose contents were not utterly drained ; with the exception of the tumblers of the cloth-merchants, of whose liquor he did not approve.

‘Dear me ! poor man ! to get only one glass out of his own bottle ! I wish I hadn’t taken his wine ; it was rather sour. Ay ! call—call away for M. Maas : threaten—threaten—threaten as you will. Your grandfather will not help you here. Blood out of a wall, and money out of a student come the same day.—Ah ! is your Highness here ?’ said Essper, turning round to our two travellers with affected surprise, although he had observed them the whole time. ‘Is your Highness here ? I’ve been looking for you through Frankfort this whole morning. *There !*—it will do for your glass. It is of chamois leather ; and I made it myself, from a beast I caught last summer in the valley of the Rhone.’ So saying, he threw over Vivian’s neck a neat chain, or cord, of very curiously-worked leather.

‘Who the devil’s this, Grey ?’ asked the Baron.

‘A funny knave, whom I once saved from a thrashing, or something of the kind, which I do him the justice to say he well deserved.’

‘Who the devil’s this ?’ said Essper George. ‘Why that’s exactly the same question I myself asked when I

saw a tall, pompous, proud fellow, dressed like a peacock on a May morning, standing at the door just now. He looked as if he'd pass himself off for an ambassador at least; but I told him that if he got his wages paid, he was luckier than most servants. Was I right, your Excellency?'

'Poor Ernstorff!' said the Baron, laughing. 'Yes; *he* certainly gets paid. Here,—you're a clever varlet; fill your glass.'

'No, no, no, no wine—no wine.—Don't you hear the brawling, and nearly the bloodshed, which are going on upstairs about a sour bottle of Rüdeshheimer? and here I see two gentles who have ordered the best wine merely to show that they are masters and not servants of the green peacock—and lo! cannot get through a glass—Lord! lord! what is man? If my fat friend, and his grandfather, would but come down stairs again, here is liquor enough to make wine and water of the Danube; for he comes from thence by his accert. No, no, I'll have none of your wine; keep it to throw on the sandy floor, that the dust may not hurt your delicate shoes, nor dirt the hand of the gentleman in green and gold when he cleans them for you in the morning.'

Here the Baron laughed again, and, as he bore his impertinence, Essper George immediately became polite.

'Does your mighty Highness go to Ems?'

'We hardly know, my friend.'

'Oh! go there, gentlemen. I've tried them all—Aix-la-Chapelle, Spa, Wiesbaden, Carlsbad, Pyrmont, every one of them; but what are these to Ems? there we all live in the same house, and eat from the same table. When there, I feel that you are all under my protection—I consider you all as my children. Besides, the country—how delightful! the mountains—the valleys—the river—the woods—and then the company so select! no sharpers—no adventurers—no blacklegs: at Ems you can be taken in by no one except your intimate friend. Oh! go to Ems, go to Ems, by all means. I'd advise

you, however, to send the gentleman in the cocked hat on before you to engage rooms ; for I can assure you that you'll have a hard chance ; the baths are very full.'

'And how do you get there, Essper ?' asked Vivian.

'Those are subjects on which I never speak,' answered the conjuror, with a solemn air.

'But have you all your stock-in-trade with you, my good fellow ? Where's the Mystery ?'

'Sold, Sir, sold ! I never keep to anything long ; Variety is the mother of Enjoyment. At Ems I shall not be a conjuror : but I never part with my box. It takes no more room than one of those medicine chests, which I daresay you've got with you in your carriage, to prop up your couple of shattered constitutions.'

'By Jove ! you're a merry impudent fellow,' said the Baron ; 'and if you like to get up behind my britchka, you may.'

'No, no, no ; a thousand thanks to your mighty Highnesses, I carry my own box, and my own body, and I shall be at Ems to-morrow in time enough to receive your lordships.'

CHAPTER V

IN a delightful valley of Nassau, formed by the picturesque windings of the Taunus mountains, and on the banks of the noisy river Lahn, stands an immense brick pile, of very irregular architecture, which nearly covers an acre of ground. This building was formerly a favourite palace of the ducal house of Nassau ; but for reasons which I cannot give, and which the reader will perhaps not require, the present Prince has thought proper to let out the former residence of his family, as an hotel for the accommodation of the company, who in the season frequent this, the most lovely spot in his lovely

little Duchy. This extensive building contains two hundred and thirty rooms, and eighty baths ; and these apartments, which are under the management of an official agent, who lives in the 'Princely Bathing House,' for such is its present dignified title, are to be engaged at fixed prices, which are marked over the doors. All the rooms in the upper story of the Princely Bathing-House open on, or are almost immediately connected with, a long corridor, which extends the whole length of the building. The ground floor, besides the space occupied by the baths, also affords a very spacious promenade, arched with stone, and surrounded with stalls, behind which are marshalled vendors of all the possible articles which can be required by the necessities of the frequenters of a watering-place. There you are greeted by the jeweller of the Palais Royal, and the *marchande de mode* of the Rue de la Paix ; the printseller from Mannheim, and the china-dealer from Dresden ; and other little speculators in the various fancy articles which abound in Vienna, Berlin, Geneva, Basle, Strasburgh and Lausanne ; such as pipes, costumes of Swiss peasantry, crosses of Mont Blanc crystal, and all varieties of national *bijouterie*. All things may here be sold, save those which administer to the nourishment of the body, or the pleasure of the palate. Let not those of my readers, who have already planned a trip to the sweet vales of the Taunus, be frightened by this last rather alarming sentence. At Ems 'eatables and drinkables' are excellent, and abounding ; but all those are solely supplied by the *restaurateur*, who farms the monopoly from the Duke. This gentleman, who is a pupil of Beauvillier's, and who has conceived an exquisite *cuisine*, by adding to the lighter graces of French cookery something of the more solid virtues of the German, presides in a saloon of immense size and magnificent decoration ; in which, during the season, upwards of three hundred persons frequent the Table d'Hôte. It is the etiquette at Ems, that, however distinguished, or however humble, the rank of the visitors, their fare and

their treatment must be alike. In one of the most aristocratic countries in the world, the sovereign prince, and his tradesman subject, may be found seated in the morning at the same board, and eating from the same dish ; as in the evening they may be seen staking on the same colour at the gaming-table, and sharing in the same interest at the Redoute.

I have said that the situation of Ems was delightful. The mountains which form the valley are not, as in Switzerland, so elevated that they confine the air, or seem to impede the facility of breathing. In their fantastic forms, the picturesque is not lost in the monotonous ; and in the rich covering of their various woods, the admiring eye finds, at the same time, beauty and repose. Opposite the ancient palace, on the banks of the Lahn, are the gardens. In these, in a neat pavilion, a band of excellent musicians seldom cease from enchanting the visitors by their execution of the most favourite specimens of German and Italian music. Numberless acacia arbours, and retired sylvan seats are here to be found, where the student, or the contemplative, may seek refuge from the noise of his more gay companions, and the tedium of eternal conversation. Here too, a *tête-à-tête* will seldom be disturbed ; and in some species of *tête-à-têtes*, we all know how very necessary and how very delightful are the perfumes of flowers, and the shade of secret trees, and the cooling sound of running waters. In these gardens also, are the billiard-room, and another saloon, in which each night meet, not merely those who are interested in the mysteries of *rouge et noir*, and the chances of *roulette* ; but, in general, the whole of the company, male and female, who are frequenting the baths. In quitting the gardens for a moment, we must not omit mentioning the interesting booth of our friend the *restaurateur*, where coffee, clear and hot, exquisite *confitures*, delicious *liqueurs*, and particularly genuine maraschino of Zara are never wanting. Nor should I forget the glittering pennons of the gay boats which glide along the Lahn ; nor the

handsome donkeys, who, with their white saddles and red bridles, seem not unworthy of the princesses whom they sometimes bear. The gardens, with an alley of lime-trees, which are farther on, near the banks of the river, afford easy promenades to the sick and debilitated; but the more robust and active need not fear monotony in the valley of the Lahn. If they sigh for the champaign country, they can climb the wild passes of the encircling mountains, and from their tops enjoy the most magnificent views of the Rhine-land. There they may gaze on that mighty river, flowing through the prolific plain, which, at the same time, it nourishes and adorns,—bounded on each side by mountains of every form, clothed with wood, or crowned with castles. Or, if they fear the fatigues of the ascent, they may wander farther up the valley, and in the wild dells, romantic forests, and grey ruins of Stein and Nassau, conjure up the old times of feudal tyranny when the forest was the only free land; and he who outraged the laws, the only one who did not suffer from their authority.

Besides the Princely Bathing-House, I must mention, that there was another old and extensive building near it, which, in very full seasons, also accommodated visitors on the same system as the palace. At present, this adjoining building was solely occupied by a Russian Archduke, who had engaged it for the season.

Such is a faint description of Ems, a place almost of unique character; for it is a watering-place with every convenience, luxury, and accommodation; and yet without shops, streets, or houses.

The Baron and Vivian were fortunate in finding rooms, for the Baths were very full; the extraordinary beauty of the weather having occasioned a very early season. They found themselves at the baths early on the morning after their arrival at Coblenz, and at three o'clock in the same day, had taken their places at the dinner-table in the great saloon. At the long table upwards of two hundred and fifty guests were assembled,

of different nations, and very different characters. There was the cunning intriguing Greek, who served well his imperial master the Russian. The order of the patron saint of Moscow, and the glittering stars of other nations which sparkled on his green uniform, told how well he had laboured for the interest of all other countries except his own ; but his clear pale complexion, his delicately-trimmed mustachios, his lofty forehead, his arched eyebrow, and his Eastern eye, recalled to the traveller, in spite of his barbarian trappings, the fine countenances of the Ægean ; and became a form which apparently might have struggled in Thermopylæ. Next to him was the Austrian diplomatist, the Sosia of all cabinets ; in whose gay address, and rattling conversation you could hardly recognise the sophistical defender of unauthorised invasion, and the subtle inventor of Holy Alliances, and Imperial Leagues. Then came the rich usurer from Frankfort, or the prosperous merchant from Hamburgh ; who, with his wife and daughters, were seeking some recreation from his flourishing counting-house, in the sylvan gaieties of a German bathing-place. Flirting with these, was an adventurous dancing-master from Paris, whose profession at present was kept in the background, and whose well-curled black hair, diamond pin, and frogged coat, hinted at the magnifico incog. : and also enabled him, if he did not choose in time to follow his own profession, to pursue another one, which he had also studied, in the profitable mystery of the Redoute. There were many other individuals, whose commonplace appearance did not reveal a character which perhaps they did not possess. There were officers in all uniforms,—and there were some uniforms without officers. But all looked perfectly *comme il faut*, and on the whole very select ; and if the great persons endeavoured for a moment to forget their dignity, still these slight improprieties were amply made up by the affected dignity of those little persons who had none to forget.

‘And how like you the Baths of Ems?’ asked the

Baron of Vivian ; 'we shall get better seats to-morrow, and perhaps be among those whom you shall know. I see many friends and some agreeable ones. In the meantime, you must make to-day a good dinner, and I'll amuse you, and assist your digestion by putting you up to all the curious characters whom you are dining with.' So saying, the Baron seized the soup-ladle.

At this moment a party entered the room, who were rather late in their appearance, but who attracted the attention of Vivian so keenly, that he almost forgot the gay crowd on whom he was lately gazing with such amusement. The group consisted of three persons ; a very handsome fashionable-looking young man, who supported on each arm a female. The lady on his right arm was apparently of about five-and-twenty years of age. She was of majestic stature ; her complexion of untinged purity. Her features were like those conceptions of Grecian sculptors, which in moments of despondency, we sometimes believe to be ideal. Her full eyes were of the same deep blue as a mountain-lake, and gleamed from under their long lashes, as that purest of waters beneath its fringing sedge. Her light brown hair was braided from her high forehead, and hung in long full curls over her neck ; the mass gathered up into a Grecian knot, and confined by a bandeau of cameos. She wore a superb dress of the richest black velvet, whose folding drapery was confined round a waist which was in exact symmetry with the proportions of her full bust, and the polished roundness of her bending neck. On the little finger of an ungloved hand, sparkled a diamond of unknown value, which was linked by a small Venetian chain to a gorgeous bracelet of the most precious stones. The countenance of the lady was dignified, without any expression of pride ; and reserved, without any of the harshness of austerity. In gazing on her, the enraptured spectator for a moment believed that Minerva had forgotten her severity, and had entered into a delightful rivalry with Venus.

Her companion was much younger, much shorter, and

of slender form. The long tresses of her chesnut hair shaded her oval face. Her small aquiline nose, bright hazel eyes, delicate mouth, and the deep colour of her lips, were as remarkable as the transparency of her complexion. The flush of her cheek was singular—it was of a brilliant pink : you may find it in the lip of an Indian shell. The blue veins played beneath her arched forehead, like lightning beneath a rainbow. She was simply dressed in white, and a damask rose, half hid in her clustering hair, was her only ornament. This lovely creature glided by Vivian Grey almost unnoticed, so fixed was his gaze on her companion. Yet, magnificent as was the style of **LADY MADELEINE TREVOR**, there were few who preferred even her commanding graces, to the softer beauties of **VIOLET FANE**.

This party having passed Vivian, proceeded to the top of the room, where places had been kept for them. Vivian's eye watched them till they were lost among surrounding visitors : their peculiar loveliness could not deceive him.

‘English, no doubt,’ observed he to the Baron ; ‘who can they be ?’

‘I haven't the least idea—that is, I don't exactly know—that is, I think they are English,’ answered the Baron, in such a confused manner that Vivian stared. Whether his Excellency observed his friend's astonishment or not, I cannot say ; but, after musing a moment, he recovered himself.

‘The unexpected sight of a face we feel that we know, and yet cannot immediately recognise, is extremely annoying—it is almost agitating. They are English ; the lady in black is Lady Madeleine Trevor ; I knew her in London.’

‘And the gentleman ?’ asked Vivian, rather anxiously : ‘is the gentleman a Mr. Trevor ?’

‘No, no, no ; Trevor, poor Trevor is dead, I think—is, I'm sure, dead. That, I am confident, is not he. He was of the — family, and was in office when I was

in England. It was in my diplomatic capacity that I first became acquainted with him. Lady Madeleine was, and, as you see, is a charming woman,—a very charming woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor.’

‘And the young lady with her?’

‘The young lady with her—I cannot exactly say—I do not exactly know. Her face is familiar to me, and yet I cannot remember her name. She must have been very young, as you may see, when I was in England; she cannot now be above eighteen. Miss Fane must therefore have been very young when I was in England. Miss Fane!—how singular I should have mentioned, her name!—that is her name—Violet Fane—a cousin, or some relation of Lady Madeleine’s;—good family, very good family.—Shall I help you to some soup?’

Whether it was from not being among his friends, or some other cause, I know not, but the Baron was certainly not in his usual spirits this day at dinner. Conversation, which with him was generally as easy as it was brilliant—like a fountain at the same time sparkling and fluent—was evidently constrained. For a few minutes he talked very fast, and was then uncommunicative, absent, and dull. He moreover drank a great deal of wine, which was not his custom; but the grape did not inspire him. Vivian found amusement in his next neighbour, a forward, bustling man, clever in his talk, very fine, but rather vulgar. He was the manager of a company of Austrian actors, and had come to Ems on the chance of forming an engagement for his troop, who generally performed at Vienna. He had been successful in his adventure, the Archduke having engaged the whole band at the New House, and in a few days the troop were to arrive; at which time, the manager was to drop the character of a travelling gentleman, and cease to dine at the Table d’Hôte of Ems. From this man Vivian learnt that Lady Madeleine Trevor had been at the Baths for some time before the season commenced; that at present, hers was the party which, from its long stay, and eminent rank,

gave the tone to the amusements of the place; the influential circle, which those who have frequented watering-places have often observed, and which may be seen at Ems, Spa, or Pyrmont, equally as at Harrogate, Tunbridge Wells, or Cheltenham.

CHAPTER VI

WHEN dinner was finished, the party broke up, and most of them assembled in the gardens. The Baron, whose countenance had assumed its wonted cheerfulness, and who excused his previous dulness by the usual story of a sudden headache, proposed to Vivian to join the promenade. The gardens were very full, and the Baron recognised many of his acquaintance.

‘My dear Colonel,—who possibly expected to meet you here? why! did you dine in the saloon? I only arrived this morning—this is my friend, Mr. Grey—Colonel von Trumpetson.’

‘An Englishman, I believe?’ said the Colonel, bowing. He was a starch *militaire*, with a blue frock coat buttoned up to his chin, a bald head with a few grey hairs, and long thin mustachios like a mandarin’s. ‘An Englishman, I believe;—pray, Sir, can you inform me whether the waistcoats of the Household troops, in England, have the double braid?’

‘Sir!’ said Vivian.

‘I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an English gentleman, your Excellency. It was only at dinner to-day that a controversy arose between Major von Musquetoon, and the Prince of Buttonstein, about the waistcoats of the English Household troops. As I said to the prince, you may argue for ever, for at present we cannot decide the fact. How little did I think when I parted from the Major, that, in a few

minutes, I should be able to settle this important question beyond a doubt ;—I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an Englishman.'

'I regret to say, Colonel, that far from being able to decide this important question, I hardly know what Household troops really are.'

'Sir, I wish you good morning,' said the Colonel, very drily ; and, staring very keenly at Vivian, he walked away.

'Well, that's beautiful, Grey, to get rid of that horrible old bore with such exquisite tact—Double braid ! an old dunder-pate !—he should be drummed out of the regiment ; but he's good enough to fight, I suppose,' added the plenipotentiary, with a smile and shrug of the shoulders, which seemed to return thanks to Providence, for having been educated in the civil service.

At this moment Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of the same gentleman, passed, and the Baron bowed. The bow was stiffly returned.

'You know her Ladyship, then !—well !'

'I did know her,' said the Baron, 'but I see from her bow, that I am at present in no very high favour. The truth is, she is a charming woman, but I never expected to see her in Germany, and there was some little commission of hers which I neglected—some little order for Eau de Cologne—or a message about a worked pocket-handkerchief, or a fancy shawl, which I utterly forgot ;—and then, I never wrote !—and you know, Grey, that these little sins of omission are never forgiven by women.'

'My dear friend, de Konigstein—one pinch ! one pinch !' chirped out a little old, odd-looking man, with a very *poudré* head, and dressed in a costume in which the glories of the *vieille cour* seemed to retire with reluctance. A diamond ring twinkled on the snuffy hand, which was encircled by a rich ruffle of dirty lace. The brown coat was not modern, and yet not quite such an one as was worn by its master, when he went to see the King dine

in public, at Versailles, before the Revolution:—large silver buckles still adorned the well-polished shoes; and silk stockings, whose hue was originally black, were picked out, with clock-work of gold.

‘My dear Marquis—I’m most happy to see you; will you try the *boulangero*?’

‘With pleasure!—with pleasure!—A-a-h! what a box! a *Louis-quatorze*, I think?’

‘Oh no! by no means so old.’

‘Pardon me, my dear fellow, my dear de Konigstein; I’ve studied the subject! I think a *Louis-quatorze*.’

‘I tell you I bought it in Sicily.’

‘A-a-h!’ slowly exclaimed the little man: then shaking his head—‘I think a *Louis-quatorze*?’

‘Well, have it so, if you like, Marquis.’

‘A-a-h! I thought so—I thought a *Louis-quatorze*. Will you try mine?—will your friend try a pinch?—does he take snuff?—what box has he got?—is it an old one?—is it a *Louis-quatorze*?’

‘He doesn’t take snuff at all.’

‘A-a-h! if he did, perhaps he’d have a box—perhaps it would be an old one—most likely a *Louis-quatorze*.’

‘Very probably,’ said the Baron.

‘A-a-h! I thought so,’ said the old man.

‘Well, good afternoon,’ said the Baron, passing on.

‘My dear de Konigstein—one pinch, one pinch—you’ve often said you have a particular regard for me.’

‘My dear Marquis!’

‘A-a-h! I thought so—you’ve often said you’d serve me, if possible.’

‘My dear Marquis, be brief.’

‘A-a-h! I will—there’s a cursed crusty old Prussian officer here—one Colonel de Trumpetson.’

‘Well, my dear Marquis, what can I do? you’re surely not going to fight him!’

‘A-a-h! no, no, no—I wish you to speak to him.’

‘Well, well, what?’

‘He takes snuff.’

‘What’s that to me?’

‘He’s got a box.’

‘Well!’

‘It’s a *Louis-quatorze*—couldn’t you get it for me?’

‘Good morning to you,’ said the Baron, pulling on Vivian.

‘You’ve had the pleasure, Grey, of meeting this afternoon two men, who have each only one idea. Colonel Von Trumpetson, and the Marquis de la Tabatière, are equally tiresome. But are they more tiresome than any other man who always speaks on the same subject? We are more irritable, but not more wearied, with a man who is always thinking of the pattern of a button-hole, or the shape of a snuff-box, than with one who is always talking about pictures, or chemistry, or politics. The true bore is that man who thinks the world is only interested in one subject, because he, himself, can only comprehend one.’

Here the Lady Madeleine passed again; and this time the Baron’s eyes were fixed on the ground.

A buzz and bustle at the other end of the gardens, to which the Baron and Vivian were advancing, announced the entry of the Archduke. His Imperial Highness was a tall man, with a quick, piercing eye, which was prevented from giving to his countenance the expression of intellect which it otherwise would have done, by the dull and almost brutal effect of his flat, Calmuck nose. He was dressed in a plain, green uniform, adorned by a single star; but his tightened waist, his stiff stock, and the elaborate attention which had evidently been bestowed upon his mustachios, denoted the military fop. The Archduke was accompanied by three or four stiff and stately-looking personages, in whom the severity of the martinet, seemed sunk in the servility of the aide-de-camp.

The Baron bowed very low to the Prince, as he drew near, and his Highness, taking off his cocked-hat with an appearance of cordial condescension, made a full stop. The silent gentlemen in the rear, who had not anticipated

this suspense in their promenade, almost foundered on the heels of their royal master; and frightened at the imminency of the profanation, forgot their stiff pomp in a precipitate retreat of half a yard.

'Baron,' said his Highness, 'why have I not seen you at the New House?'

'I have but this moment arrived, may it please your Imperial Highness.'

'Your companion,' continued the Archduke, pointing very graciously to Vivian.

'My intimate friend, my fellow-traveller, and an Englishman. May I have the honour of presenting Mr. Grey to your Highness?'

'Any friends of the Baron von Konigstein I shall always feel great pleasure in having presented to me. Sir, I feel great pleasure in having you presented to me. Sir, you ought to be proud of the name of Englishman—Sir, the English are a noble nation—Sir, I have the highest respect for the English nation!'

Vivian of course bowed very low, and of course made a very proper speech on the occasion, which, as all speeches of that kind should be, was very dutiful and quite inaudible.

'And what news from Berlin, Baron? let us move on,' and the Baron, with Vivian on his arm, turned with the Archduke. The silent gentlemen, settling their mustachios, followed in the rear. For about half an hour, anecdote after anecdote, scene after scene, caricature after caricature, were poured out with prodigal expenditure for the amusement of his Highness; who did nothing during the exhibition but smile, stroke his whiskers, and at the end of the best stories fence with his forefinger at the Baron's side—with a gentle laugh, and a mock shake of the head—and a 'Eh! von Konigstein, you're too bad!' Here Lady Madeleine Trevor passed again, and the Archduke's hat nearly touched the ground. He received a most gracious bow.

'Finish the story about Salvinski, Baron, and then I'll

introduce you for a reward to the most lovely creature in existence—a countrywoman of yours, Mr. Grey—Lady Madeleine Trevor.’

‘I have the honour of a slight acquaintance with her Ladyship’ said the Baron; ‘I had the pleasure of knowing her in England.’

‘Indeed! Oh! most fortunate mortal! I see she has stopped—talking to some stranger. Let us turn and join her.’

The Archduke and the two friends accordingly turned, and of course the silent gentlemen in the rear followed with due precision.

‘Lady Madeleine!’ said his Highness, ‘I flattered myself for a moment that I might have had the honour of presenting to you a gentleman for whom I have a great esteem; but he has proved to me this moment that he is more fortunate than myself, since he had the honour before me of an acquaintance with Lady Madeleine Trevor.’

‘I have not forgotten Baron von Konigstein,’ said her Ladyship, with a serious air; ‘may I ask your Highness how you prospered in your negotiation with the Austrian troop?’

‘Perfectly successful!—perfectly successful!—Inspired by your Ladyship’s approbation, my steward has really done wonders. He almost deserves a diplomatic appointment for the talent which he has shown; but what should I do without Cracowsky? Lady Madeleine, can you conceive what I should do without Cracowsky?’

‘Not the least,’ said her Ladyship, very good-naturedly.

‘Cracowsky is everything to me—everything. It is impossible to say what Cracowsky is to me. I owe everything to Cracowsky. To Cracowsky I owe being here.’ The Archduke bowed very low, for this eulogium on his steward also conveyed a compliment to her Ladyship. The Archduke was certainly right in believing that he owed his summer excursion to Ems to his steward. That wily Pole, regularly every year put his Imperial

master's summer excursion up to auction, and according to the biddings of the proprietors of the chief baths, did he take care that his master regulated his visit. The *restaurateur* of Ems, in collusion with the official agent of the Duke of Nassau, were fortunate this season in having the Archduke knocked down to them.

'May I flatter myself that Miss Fane feels herself better?' asked the Archduke.

'She certainly does feel herself much better, but my anxiety about her does not decrease. In her illness apparent convalescence is sometimes more fearful than actual suffering.'

The Archduke continued by the side of her Ladyship for about twenty minutes, seizing every opportunity of uttering, in the most courtly tone, the most inane compliments; and then trusting that he might soon have her Ladyship's opinion respecting the Austrian troop at the New House; and that von Königstein and his English friend would not delay letting him see them there, his Imperial Highness, followed by his silent suite, left the gardens.

'I am afraid, your Ladyship must have almost mistaken me for a taciturn lord chamberlain,' said the Baron, occupying immediately the Archduke's vacated side.

'Baron von Königstein must be very changed, if silence be imputed to him as a fault,' said Lady Madeleine, with rather a severe smile.

'Baron von Königstein *is* very much *changed* since last he had the pleasure of conversing with Lady Madeleine Trevor; more changed than her Ladyship will perhaps believe; more changed than he can sometimes himself believe; I hope, I flatter myself, I feel sure, that he will not be less acceptable to Lady Madeleine Trevor, because he is no longer rash, passionate and unthinking; because he has learnt to live more for others and less for himself.'

'Baron von Königstein does indeed appear changed; since, by his own account, he has become in a very few

years, a being, in whose existence philosophers scarcely believe—a perfect man.’

‘My self-conceit has been so often reprovèd by your Ladyship, that I will not apologise for a quality which I almost flattered myself I no longer possessed; but you will excuse, I am sure, one, who in zealous haste to prove himself amended, has, I fear, almost shown that he has deceived himself.’

Some strange thoughts occurred to Vivian, whose eyes had never quitted her Ladyship’s face while this conversation was taking place. ‘Is this a woman to resent the neglect of an order for Eau de Cologne? my dear von Konigstein, you’re a very pleasant fellow, but this is not the way men apologise for the nonpurchase of a pocket-handkerchief!’

‘Has your Ladyship been long at Ems?’

‘Nearly a month: we are travelling in consequence of the ill-health of a relation. It was our intention to have gone on to Pisa, but our physician, in consequence of the extreme heat of the summer, is afraid of the fatigue of travelling, and has recommended Ems. The air between these mountains is very soft and pure, and I have no reason to regret at present that we have not advanced farther on our journey.’

‘The lady who was with your party at dinner is, I fear, your invalid. She certainly does not look like one. I think,’ said the Baron, with an effort, ‘I think that her face is not unknown to me. It is difficult, even after so many years, to mistake Miss——’

‘Fane,’ said Lady Madeleine, very firmly; for it seemed that the Baron required a little assistance at the end of his sentence.

‘Ems,’ returned his Excellency, with great rapidity of utterance—‘Ems is, indeed, a charming place—at least to me. I have, within these few years, quite recurred to the feelings of my boyhood; nothing to me is more disgustingly wearisome than the gay bustle of a city. My present diplomatic appointment at Frankfort ensures

a constant life among the most charming scenes of nature. Naples, which was offered to me, I refused. Eight years ago, I should have thought an appointment at Naples a Paradise on earth.'

'Your Excellency must indeed be changed,' remarked her Ladyship.

'How beautiful is the vicinity of the Rhine! I have passed within these three days, for almost the twentieth time in my life, through the Rheingau; and yet how fresh, and lovely, and novel, seemed all its various beauties.—My young travelling companion is very enthusiastic about his gem of Germany.—He is one of your Ladyship's countrymen. Might I take the liberty of introducing to you—Mr. Grey!'

Her Ladyship, as if it could now no longer be postponed, introduced to the two gentlemen, her brother, Mr. St. George. This gentleman, who, during the whole previous conversation, had kept his head in a horizontal position, looking neither to the right, nor to the left, and apparently unconscious that any one was conversing with his sister, because, according to the English custom, he was not '*introduced*'—now suddenly turned round, and welcomed his acquaintance with great cordiality.

'Mr. Grey,' asked her Ladyship, 'are you of Dorsetshire?'

'My mother is a Dorsetshire woman; her family name is Vivian, which name I also bear—Sir Hargrave Vivian, of Chester Grange.'

'Have you a father living, may I ask?'

'At present in England.'

'Then I think we are longer acquainted than we have been introduced. I met your father at Sir Hargrave Vivian's only last Christmas. Of such a father you must indeed be proud. He spoke of you in those terms that make me congratulate myself that I have met the son. You have been long from England, I think?'

'Nearly a year and a half; and I only regret my

absence from it, because it deprives me of the presence of my parents.'

The Baron had resigned his place by Lady Madeleine, and was already in close conversation with Mr. St. George, from whose arm Lady Madeleine's was disengaged. No one acted the part of Asmodeus with greater spirit than his Excellency; and the secret history of every person whose secret history could be amusing, delighted Mr. St. George.

'There,' said the Baron, 'goes the son of an unknown father; his mother followed the camp, and her offspring was early initiated in the mysteries of military petty larceny. As he grew up, he became the most skilful plunderer that ever rifled the dying of both sides. Before he was twenty, he followed the army as a petty chapman, and amassed an excellent fortune by re-acquiring after a battle, the very goods and trinkets which he had sold at an immense price before it. Such a wretch could do nothing but prosper, and in due time, the sutler's brat became a Commissary general. He made millions in a period of general starvation, and cleared at least a hundred thousand dollars, by embezzling the shoe leather during a retreat. He is now a Baron, covered with orders, and his daughters are married to some of our first nobles. There goes a Polish Count, who is one of the greatest gamblers in Christendom. In the same season he lost to a Russian general, at one game of chess, his chief castle, and sixteen thousand acres of woodland; and recovered himself on another game, on which he won of a Turkish Pashaw one hundred and eighty thousand leopard skins. The Turk, who was a man of strict honour, paid the Count, by embezzling the tribute in kind of the province he governed; and, as on quarter-day he could not, of course, make up his accounts with the Divan, he joined the Greeks.'

While the Baron was entertaining Mr. St. George, the conversation between Lady Madeleine and Vivian proceeded,

‘Your father expressed great disappointment to me, at the impossibility of his paying you a visit, in consequence of your mother’s illness. Do you not long to see him?’

‘More, much more, than I can express. Did your Ladyship think my father in good spirits?’

‘Generally so; as cheerful as all fathers can be without their only son,’ said her Ladyship, smiling very kindly.

‘Did he complain then of my absence?’

‘He regretted it.’

‘I linger in Germany with the hope of seeing him; otherwise I should have now been much farther south. You will be glad to hear that my mother is quite recovered; at least, my last letters inform me so. Did you find Sir Hargrave as amusing as ever?’

‘When is the old gentleman otherwise than the most delightful of old men? Sir Hargrave is one of my greatest favourites. I should like to persuade you to return, and see them all. Can’t you fancy Chester Grange very beautiful now? Albert,’ said her Ladyship, turning to her brother, ‘what is the number of our apartments? Mr. Grey, the sun has now disappeared, and I fear the night air among these mountains. We have hardly yet summer nights, though we certainly have summer days. We shall be happy to see you at our rooms.’ So saying, bowing very cordially to Vivian, and less stiffly to the Baron than she had done, Lady Madeleine left the gardens.

‘There goes the most delightful woman in the world,’ said the Baron; ‘how fortunate that you know her! for really, as you might have observed, I have no great claims on her indulgent notice. I was certainly very wild in England; but then, young men, you know, Grey!—and I didn’t leave a card, or call, before I went; and the English are very stiff, and precise about those things; and the Trevors had been very kind to me. I think we’d better take a little coffee

now ; and then, if you like, we'll just stroll into the REDOUTE.'

In a brilliantly illuminated saloon, adorned with Corinthian columns, and casts from some of the most famous antique statues, assembled between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, many of the visitors at Ems. On each side of the room was placed a long narrow table, one of which was covered with green baize, and unattended ; while the variously coloured leather surface of the other was very closely surrounded by an interested crowd. Behind this table stood two individuals of very different appearance. The first was a short, thick man, whose only business was dealing certain portions of playing cards with quick succession, one after the other ; and as the fate of the table was decided by this process, did his companion, an extremely tall, thin man, throw various pieces of money upon certain stakes, which were deposited by the bystanders on different parts of the table ; or, which was much oftener the case, with a silver rake with a long ebony handle, sweep into a large enclosure near him, the scattered sums. This enclosure was called the Bank, and the mysterious ceremony in which these persons were assisting, was the celebrated game of Rouge-et-Noir. A deep silence was strictly preserved by those who immediately surrounded the table ; no voice was heard, save that of the little, short, stout dealer ; when, without an expression of the least interest, he seemed mechanically to announce the fate of the different colours. No other sound was heard, except the jingle of the dollars and napoleons, and the ominous rake of the tall, thin banker. The countenances of those who were hazarding their money were grave and gloomy : their eyes were fixed, their brows contracted, and their lips projected ; and yet there was an evident effort visible, to show that they were both easy and unconcerned. Each player held in his hand a small piece of pasteboard, on which, with a steel pricker, he marked the run of the cards ; in order, from his observa-

tions, to regulate his own play:—the Rouge-et-Noir player imagines that Chance is not capricious. Those who were not interested in the game, promenaded in two lines within the tables; or, seated in recesses between the pillars, formed small parties for conversation.

As Vivian and the Baron entered, Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of an elderly man, left the room; but as she was in earnest conversation, she did not observe them.

‘I suppose we must throw away a dollar or two, Grey?’ said the Baron, as he walked up to the table.

‘My dear de Konigstein—one pinch—one pinch!’

‘Ah! Marquis, what fortune to-night?’

‘Bad—bad! I have lost my napoleon: I never risk farther. There’s that cursed crusty old de Trumpetson, persisting, as usual, in his run of bad luck; because he never will give in. Trust me, my dear de Konigstein, it’ll end in his ruin; and then, if there’s a sale of his effects, I shall, perhaps, get his snuff-box—a-a-h!’

‘Come, Grey; shall I throw down a couple of napoleons on joint account? I don’t care much for play myself; but I suppose, at Ems, we must make up our minds to lose a few louis. Here! now, for the red—joint account, mind!’

‘Done.’

‘There’s the Archduke! Let’s go and make our bow; we needn’t stick at the table as if our whole soul were staked with our crown pieces:—we’ll make our bow, and then return in time to know our fate.’ So saying, the gentlemen walked up to the top of the room.

‘Why, Grey!—Surely no—it cannot be—and yet it is. De Bœffleurs, how d’ye do?’ said the Baron, with a face beaming with joy, and a hearty shake of the hand. ‘My dear, dear fellow, how the devil did you manage to get off so soon? I thought you were not to be here for a fortnight: we only arrived ourselves to-day.’

‘Yes—but I’ve made an arrangement which I did

not anticipate ; and so I posted after you immediately. Whom do you think I have brought with me ?’

‘Who ?’

‘Salvinski.’

‘Ah ! And the Count ?’

‘Follows immediately. I expect him to-morrow or next day. Salvinski is talking to the Archduke ; and see, he beckons to me. I suppose I’m going to be presented.’

The Chevalier moved forward, followed by the Baron and Vivian.

‘Any friend of Prince Salvinski I shall always have great pleasure in having presented to me. Chevalier, I feel great pleasure in having you presented to me. Chevalier, you ought to be proud of the name of Frenchman. Chevalier, the French are a grand nation. Chevalier, I have the highest respect for the French nation.’

‘The most subtle diplomatist,’ thought Vivian, as he recalled to mind his own introduction, ‘would be puzzled to decide to which interest his Imperial Highness leans.’

The Archduke now entered into conversation with the Prince, and most of the circle who surrounded him. As his Highness was addressing Vivian, the Baron let slip our hero’s arm, and seizing hold of the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, began walking up and down the room with him, and was soon engaged in very animated conversation. In a few minutes, the Archduke, bowing to his circle, made a move, and regained the side of a Saxon lady, from whose interesting company he had been disturbed by the arrival of Prince Salvinski—an individual of whose long stories and dull romances the Archduke had, from experience, a particular dread : but his Highness was always very courteous to the Poles.

‘Grey, I’ve dispatched de Bœffleurs to the house, to instruct his servant and Ernstorff to do the impossible, in order that our rooms may be all together. You’ll be delighted with de Bœffleurs when you know him, and I expect you to be great friends. Oh ! by-the-bye, his

unexpected arrival has quite made us forget our venture at Rouge-et-Noir. Of course we're too late now for anything; even if we had been fortunate, our doubled stake, remaining on the table, is, of course, lost: we may as well, however, walk up.' So saying, the Baron reached the table.

'That is your Excellency's stake! that is your Excellency's stake!' exclaimed many voices as he came up.

'What's the matter, my friends? what's the matter?' asked the Baron very calmly.

'There's been a run on the red! there's been a run on the red! and your Excellency's stake has doubled each time. It has been 4—8—16—32—64—128—256—and now it's 512!' quickly rattled a little thin man in spectacles, pointing at the same time to his unparalleled line of punctures. This was one of those officious, noisy little men, who are always ready to give you unasked information on every possible subject; and who are never so happy as when they are watching over the interest of some stranger, who never thanks them for their unnecessary solicitude.

Vivian, in spite of his philosophy, felt the excitement and wonder of the moment. He looked very earnestly at the Baron, whose countenance, however, was perfectly unmoved.

'Grey,' said he, very coolly, 'it seems we're in luck.'

'The stake's then not all your own?' very eagerly asked the little man in spectacles.

'No part of it is yours, Sir,' answered the Baron very drily.

'I'm going to deal,' said the short, thick man behind. 'Is the board cleared?'

'Your Excellency then allows the stake to remain?' inquired the tall thin banker, with affected *nonchalance*.

'Oh! certainly,' said the Baron, with real *nonchalance*.

'Three—eight—fourteen—twenty-four—thirty-four. Rouge 34—.'

All crowded nearer; the table was surrounded five or

six deep, for the wonderful run of luck had got wind, and nearly the whole room were round the table. Indeed, the Archduke and Saxon lady, and of course the silent suite, were left alone at the upper part of the room. The tall banker did not conceal his agitation. Even the short, stout dealer ceased to be a machine. All looked anxious except the Baron. Vivian looked at the table; his Excellency watched, with a keen eye, the little dealer. No one even breathed as the cards descended—‘Ten—twenty’—(Here the countenance of the banker brightened)—‘twenty-two—twenty-five—twenty-eight—thirty-one—Noir 31.—The bank’s broke: no more play to-night. The Roulette table opens immediately.’

In spite of the great interest which had been excited, nearly the whole crowd, without waiting to congratulate the Baron, rushed to the opposite side of the room, in order to secure places at the Roulette table.

‘Put these five hundred and twelve napoleons into a bag,’ said the Baron; ‘Grey, this is your share, and I congratulate you. With regard to the other half, Mr. Hermann, what bills have you got?’

‘Two on Gogel’s house of Frankfort,—accepted of course,—for two hundred and fifty each, and these twelve napoleons will make it right,’ said the tall banker, as he opened a large black pocket-book, from which he took out two small bits of paper. The Baron examined them, and after having seen them endorsed, put them calmly into his pocket, not forgetting the twelve napoleons; and then taking Vivian’s arm, and regretting extremely that he should have the trouble of carrying such a weight, he wished Mr. Hermann a very good night and success at his Roulette, and walked with his companion quietly home. Thus passed a day at Ems!

CHAPTER VII

ON the following morning, Vivian met with his friend Essper George, behind a small stall in the Bazaar.

‘Well, your Highness, what do you wish? Here are Eau de Cologne, violet soap, and watch-ribbons; a smelling bottle of Ems crystal; a snuff-box of fig-tree wood. Name your price, name your price: the least trifle that can be given by a man who breaks a bank, must be more than my whole stock in trade’s worth.’

‘I have not paid you yet, Essper, for my glass chain. There is your share of my winnings: the fame of which, it seems, has reached even you!’ added Vivian, with no pleased air.

‘I thank your Highness for the Nap; but I hope I have not offended by alluding to a certain event, which shall be passed over in silence,’ continued Essper George, with a look of mock solemnity. ‘I really think your Highness has but a faint appetite for good fortune. They deserve her most who value her least.’

‘Have you any patrons at Ems, Essper, that have induced you to fix on this place in particular for your speculations? Here, I should think you have many active rivals,’ said Vivian, looking round the various stalls.

‘I have a patron here, may it please your Highness, a patron who has never deceived, and who will never desert me,—I want no other;—and that’s myself. Now here comes a party: could your Highness just tell me the name of that tall lady now?’

‘If I tell you it is Lady Madeleine Trevor, what will it profit you?’

Before Vivian could well finish his sentence, Essper had drawn out a long horn from beneath his small counter, and sounded a blast which echoed through the arched

passages. The attention of every one was excited, and no part of the following speech was lost.

‘The celebrated Essper George, fresh from Fairyland, dealer in pomatum and all sorts of perfumery, watches, crosses, Ems crystal, coloured prints, Dutch toys, Dresden china, Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, French crackers, chamois bracelets, tame poodles, and Cherokee corkscrews, mender of mandolins, and all other musical instruments, etc., etc., etc., etc., to her Royal Highness, Lady Madeleine Trevor, and all her royal family, has just arrived at Ems, where he only intends to stay two or three days, and a few more weeks besides.—Now, your Ladyship, what do you wish?’

‘Mr. Grey,’ said her Ladyship, smiling, ‘you can perhaps explain the reason of this odd greeting. Who is this singular being?’

‘The celebrated Essper George, just’——again commenced the conjuror; but Vivian prevented the repetition.

‘He is an odd knave, Lady Madeleine, that I’ve met with before, at other places. I believe I may add, an honest one. What say you, Essper?’

‘More honest than moonlight, my Lady, for that deceives every one; and less honest than self-praise, my Lady, for that deceives no one.’

‘My friend, you have a ready wit.’

‘My wit is like a bustling servant, my Lady; always ready when not wanted; and never present at a pinch.’

‘Come, I must have a pair of your chamois bracelets. How sell you them?’

‘I sell nothing, my Lady; all here is gratis to beauty, virtue, and nobility: and these are my only customers.’

‘Thanks will not supply a stock-in-trade though, Essper,’ said Vivian.

‘Very true! your Highness; but my customers are apt to leave some slight testimonies behind them of the obligations which they are under to me; and these, at the same time, are the prop of my estate and the proof of their discretion. But who comes here?’ said Essper,

drawing out his horn. The sight of this terrible instrument reminded Lady Madeleine how greatly the effect of music is heightened by distance, and she made a speedy retreat. Her Ladyship, with her companion, the elderly gentleman with whom she left the Redoute the preceding night, and Vivian, stopped one moment to watch the party to whom Essper George alluded. It was a family procession of a striking character.

Three daughters abreast, flanked by two elder sons, formed the first file. The father, a portly prosperous-looking man, followed, with his lady on his arm. Then came two nursery maids, with three children, between the tender ages of five and six. The second division of the grand army, consisting of three younger sons, immediately followed. This was commanded by a tutor. A governess and two young daughters then advanced; and then came the extreme rear—the sutlers of the camp—in the persons of two footmen in rich laced liveries, who each bore a basket on his arm, filled with various fancy articles, which had been all purchased during the promenade of this nation through only part of the bazaar.

‘Who can they be?’ said her Ladyship.

‘English,’ said the elderly gentleman; who had been already introduced by Lady Madeleine to Vivian as her uncle, Mr. Sherborne.

The trumpet of Essper George produced a due effect upon the great party. The commander-in-chief stopped at his little stall, and as if this were the signal for general attack and plunder, the files were all immediately broken up. Each individual dashed at his prey, and the only ones who struggled to maintain a semblance of discipline were the nursery maids, the tutor, and the governess, who experienced the greatest difficulty in suppressing the early taste which the detachment of light infantry indicated for booty. But Essper George was in his element: he joked, he assisted, he exhibited, he explained; tapped the cheeks of the children, and complimented the elder ones; and finally, having parted at a prodigious profit

with nearly his whole stock, paid himself out of a large and heavy purse, which the portly father, in his utter inability to comprehend the complicated accounts and the debased currency, with great frankness deposited in the hands of the master of the stall, desiring him to settle his own claims.

‘The tradesman is more singular even than his customers,’ said Mr. Sherborne; ‘I think you said you knew something of him, Mr. Grey?’

‘I knew him, Sir, before, as a conjuror at Frankfort fair.’

‘By a conjuror, do you mean, Mr. Grey, one of those persons who profess an ability to summon, by the adjuration in a sacred name, a departed spirit; or merely one, who by his dexterity in the practice of sleight-of-hand, produces certain optical delusions on the sight and senses of his fellow-men?’

‘I met Essper George certainly only in your latter capacity, Mr. Sherborne.’

‘Then, Sir, I cannot agree with you in your definition of his character. I should rather style him a *juggler* than a *conjuror*. Would you call that man a *conjuror* who plays a trick with a cup and balls—a sprinkling of rice, or a bad shilling?’

‘You are perhaps, Sir, critically speaking right; but the world in general are not such purists as Mr. Sherborne. I should not hesitate to describe Essper George as a *conjuror*. It is an use of the word which common parlance has sanctioned. We must always remember that custom is stronger than etymology.’

‘Sir, are you aware that you’re giving loose to very dangerous sentiments? I may be too precise, I may be too particular; but Sir, I read Addison—and Sir, I think Pope a poet.’

‘Then Sir, I am happy to say that our tastes agree,’ said Vivian, bowing.

‘I’m very happy to hear it—I’m very glad of it—Sir, I congratulate you—give me your hand—you’re the

first bearable young man that I've met with for these last twenty years.—Sir, they sometimes talk of our laws and constitution being in danger, which is seldom true—how is it that no one calls out that our language is in danger? A noble poet, whom I honour for his defence of Pope, and who, in my opinion, has gained more glory by that letter of his, than by all the rhapsodies of false brilliancy, bad taste, and exaggerated feeling, which ever claimed the attention of the world under the title of *Eastern Tales*, has called this the AGE OF BRONZE—why didn't he call it the AGE OF SLANG?'

'But, my dear uncle,' said Lady Madeleine, 'now that you and Mr. Grey understand each other, you surely will not maintain that his use of the word *conjuror* was erroneous. Custom surely has some influence upon language. You would think me very affected, I'm sure, if I were to talk of putting on a *neck-kerchief*.'

'My dear, Mr. Grey *was* right, and I was wrong: I carried the point a little too far; but I feel it my duty to take every opportunity of informing the youth of the present day that I hold them in absolute contempt. Their affectation, their heartlessness, their artificial feelings, their want of all real, genuine, gentlemanly, English sentiments,—and, above all, their slang,—have disgusted me—I'm very glad to find that Mr. Grey is not guilty of these follies—I'm very glad to find that he believes that a man older than himself is not quite a fool—I wish I could say as much for Albert. Mr. Grey was certainly right:—next to being correct, a man should study to be candid—I haven't met with a candid man these fifty years—no one now will own, by any chance, they're ever wrong. Now, for myself, it's very odd, I never form a hasty opinion, and yet I'm not always right: but I always own it—I make it the principle of my life to be candid.'

'I hope I may be allowed to ask after Miss Fane, although I have not the honour of her acquaintance.'

'She continues much better; my uncle and myself

are now about to join her in the Lime-walk, where, by this time, she and Albert must have arrived ; if you are not otherwise engaged, and will join our morning stroll, it will give us much pleasure.'

Nothing in the world could give Vivian greater pleasure ; he felt himself irresistibly impelled to the side of Lady Madeleine ; and only regretted his acquaintance with the Baron, because he felt conscious that there was some secret cause, which prevented that intimacy from existing between his Excellency and the Trevor party, which his amusing talents and his influential rank would otherwise have easily produced. When they reached the Lime-walk, Miss Fane and her cousin were not there, although the time of appointment was considerably past.

'I hope nothing has happened,' said Lady Madeleine ; 'I trust she is not taken unwell.'

'Quite improbable !' said Mr. Sherborne ; 'there must be some other reason : if she were unwell, the servant would have been here.'

'Let us return,' said Lady Madeleine.

'By no means, my dear,' said Mr. Sherborne, who had the greatest affection for his nieces ; 'Mr. Grey will, I have no doubt, have the goodness to remain with your Ladyship, and I will fetch Violet ; you may depend upon it, *she* is ready to come' ; so saying, Mr. Sherborne stalked off at a very quick pace.

'My dear uncle is rather a character, Mr. Grey ; but he is as remarkable for his excellence of heart, as for any little peculiarities in his habits. I am glad that you have made a favourable impression upon him ; because, as I hope you will be much in his company, you stand now no chance of being included in the list of young men whom he delights to torment, at the head of which, I regret to say, is my brother. By-the-bye, I do not know whether I may be allowed to congratulate you upon your brilliant success at the Redoute last night. It is fortunate that all have not to regret your arrival at Ems as much as poor Mr. Hermann.'

‘The run of fortune was certainly most extraordinary. I’m only sorry that the Goddess should have showed her favours on one who neither deserves nor desires them ; for I’ve no wish to be rich ; and as I never lost by her caprices, it is hardly fair that I should gain by them.’

‘You do not play then, much ?’

‘I never played in my life, till last night. Gambling has never been one of my follies : although my catalogue of errors is fuller, perhaps, than most men’s.’

‘I think Baron von Königstein was your partner in the exploit.’

‘He was ; and apparently as little pleased at the issue, as myself.’

‘Indeed !—Have you known the Baron long ?’

‘You will be surprised to hear that we are only friends of a week. I have been living, ever since I was in Germany, a most retired life. A circumstance of a most painful nature drove me from England—a circumstance of which I can hardly flatter myself, and can hardly wish, that your Ladyship should be ignorant.’

‘I am not unacquainted, Mr. Grey,’ said Lady Madeleine, much moved, ‘with an unhappy event, which we need not again mention. Believe me, that I learnt the sad history from one, who, while he spoke the rigid truth, spoke of the living sufferer in terms of the fondest affection.’

‘A father !’ said Vivian, with an agitation which he did not affect to suppress, ‘a father can hardly be expected to be impartial.’

‘Such a father as yours must always be so. He is one of those men who must be silent, or speak truth. I only wish that he was with us now, to assist me in bringing about what he must greatly desire—your return to England.’

‘It cannot be—it cannot be—I look back to the last year which I spent in that country with feelings of such disgust, I look forward to a return to that country with feelings of such repugnance—that—but I feel I’m

trespassing beyond all bounds, in dwelling on these subjects to your Ladyship. They are those on which I have never yet conversed with human being; but the unexpected meeting with a friend—with a friend of my father, I mean, has surprised me into a display of feelings which I thought were dead within me; and for which, I am sure, the custom of society requires an apology.'

'Oh! do not say so, Mr. Grey—do not say so! When I promised your father, that in case we met, I should even seek your society, I entered into an engagement, which, though I am surprised I am now called upon to fulfil, I did not form in a careless spirit. Let us understand each other: I am inclined to be your friend, if you will permit it; and the object which I wish to obtain by our friendship, I have not concealed: at least, I am frank. I have suffered too much myself, not to understand how dangerous, and how deceitful is the excess of grief. You have allowed yourself to be overcome by that which Providence intended as a lesson of instruction—not as a sentence of despair. In your solitude you have increased the shadow of those fantasies of a heated brain, which converse with the pure sunshine of the world, would have enabled you to dispel.'

'The pure sunshine of the world, Lady Madeleine!—would that it had ever lighted me! My youth flourished in the unwholesome sultriness of a blighted atmosphere, which I mistook for the resplendent brilliancy of a summer day. How deceived I was, you may judge, not certainly from finding me here; but I am *here*, because I have ceased to suffer, only in having ceased to hope.'

'You have ceased to hope, Mr. Grey, because hope and consolation are not the visible companions of solitude, which are of a darker nature. Hope and consolation spring from those social affections, which your father, among others, has taught me to believe imperishable. With such a parent, are you justified in acting the part of a misanthrope? Ought you not rather to hope, to

believe that there are others, whose principle of being is as benevolent, if not as beneficial as his own ? ’

‘ Lady Madeleine, I do believe it ; if I had doubted it, my doubts must end this day ; but you mistake in believing that I am a misanthrope. It is not Sorrow now that makes me sad ; but Thought that has made me grave. I have done with grief ; but my release from suffering has been gained at a high price. The ransom which freed me from the slavery of sorrow was—HAPPINESS.’

‘ I am no metaphysician, Mr. Grey, but I fear you have embraced a dark philosophy. Converse with the world, now that your passions are subdued, and your mind matured, will do more for you than all the arguments of philosophers. I hope yet to find you a believer in the existence of that good which we all worship, and all pursue. Happiness comes when we least expect it, and to those who strive least to obtain it—as you were fortunate yesterday at the Redoute, when you played without an idea of winning. The truth seems, that after all, we are the authors of our own sorrow. In an eager pursuit to be happy, and to be rich, men do many unwise, and some unprincipled actions ; it ends in their becoming miserable, and continuing poor. The common course of events will bring to each mortal his fair share of fortune. The whole secret of life seems to be to restrain our passions, and let the common course of events have its run. But I will not enter into an argument which I have not the vanity to suppose that I possess the ability to maintain ; and yet which I feel that I ought not to have the weakness to lose. But here comes my uncle, and Violet too ! Well, my dear Sir, you’ve brought the truant, I see ! ’

‘ Brought her, indeed, dear little thing ! I knew it was not her fault ; I said she was not unwell ; I wonder what St. George will do next ! Mr. Grey, this is my niece Violet, Miss Fane : and Violet, my dear, this is Mr. Grey, and I wish all persons of his age were like him.

As for the Honourable Mr. St. George, he gets more unbearable every day. I suppose soon he'll 'cut' his own family.'

'Well, I regret uncle, that I think in this business you are entirely wrong,' said Miss Fane.

'Now, Violet! now, how can you be so wilful! to contradict me so, when you haven't a shadow of a defence for your cousin's unprincipled conduct!'

'My dear uncle, is it so unprincipled to break an appointment? I think it is one of the most agreeable and pleasant habits in the world. No young man is expected to keep an appointment.'

'Now, Violet! how can you go on so? You know if there's one thing in the world that I detest more than another, it is breaking an appointment—a vice, which, as far as I can observe, has originated in your *young men* of the present day. And who the devil are these young men, that the whole system of civilised society is to be disorganised for their convenience? *Young men*, indeed! I hate the phrase. I wish I could hear of more *young gentlemen*, and a fewer *young men*. There isn't a young man in the world for whom I haven't the most sovereign contempt; I don't mean you, Mr. Grey. I've the highest respect for you. I mean that mass of half-educated, inexperienced, insolent, conceited puppies, who think every man's a fool who's older than themselves; whose manners are a mixture of the vices of all nations, and whose talk is the language of none; at the head of whom is my nephew—your brother, Lady Madeleine Trevor—your cousin, Violet Fane—I mean Mr. Albert St. George.'

Mr. Sherborne had now worked himself into a terrible passion; and the two ladies increased his irritability, by their incessant laughter.

'Well, I confess I do not see that Albert deserves this tirade,' continued Miss Fane; 'only think, my dear uncle, how many unexpected demands a man has upon his time. For all we know, unforeseen business may have peremptorily required Albert's attention. How do

you know that he hasn't been looking at a horse for a friend ; or completing the purchase of a monkey ; or making some discoveries in the highest branches of experimental philosophy ? perhaps he *has* succeeded in lighting his cigar with a burning-glass.'

'Miss Fane !'

'Mr. Sherborne !'

'If I were here alone, if Lady Madeleine were only here, I could excuse this ; but how you are to answer to your conscience giving a stranger, Mr. Grey, a young gentleman for whom I have the highest respect, the impression that you, my niece, can tolerate for a moment, the existence of such monstrous absurdities is to me the most unaccountable thing that——'

'My dear uncle ! how do you know that Mr. Grey has not got a monkey himself ? You really should remember who is present, when you are delivering these philippics on the manners of the present century, and be cautious, lest, at the same time, you are not only violent, but personal.'

'Now Violet, my dear !'

'My dear Sir !' said Lady Madeleine, 'Violet is exerting herself too much ; you know you are an enchanted lady at present, and may neither laugh, speak, nor sing.'

'Well then, dear uncle, let us talk no more of poor Albert's want of memory. Had he come, I should very likely have been unwell, and then he would have stayed at home the whole morning for no earthly good. As it is, here I am ; with the prospect of a very pleasant walk, not only feeling quite well, but decidedly better every day,—so now let us make an apology to Mr. Grey, for having kept him so long standing.'

'Violet, you're an angel ! though I'm your uncle, who say so ;—and perhaps, after all, as it wasn't a positive appointment, St. George is not so much to blame. And I will say this for him, that with all his faults, he is on the whole very respectful to me, and I

sometimes try him hard. I'm not in the habit of making hasty observations, but if ever I find myself doing so, I'm always ready to own it. There's no excuse, however, for his not fetching you, my dear!—what business had he to be going about with that Baron von Konigstein—that foreign——'

'Friend of Mr. Grey's, my dear uncle,' said Lady Madeleine.

'Humph!'

As Mr. Sherborne mentioned the Baron's name, the smiling face of Lady Madeleine Trevor became clouded, but the emotion was visible only for a moment, as the soft shadow steals over the sunny wood. Miss Fane led on her uncle, as if she were desirous to put an end to the conversation.

'You would scarcely imagine, Mr. Grey, from my cousin's appearance, and high spirits, that we are travelling for her health; nor do her physicians, indeed, give us any cause for serious uneasiness—yet I confess, that at times, I cannot help feeling very great anxiety. Her flushed cheek, and the alarming languor which constantly succeeds any exertion or excitement, make me fear that her complaint is more deeply seated than they are willing to acknowledge.'

'Let us hope that the extraordinary heat of the weather may account, in a great degree, for this distressing languor.'

'We are willing to adopt any reasoning that gives us hope, but I cannot help remembering that her mother died of consumption.'

'Oh! Lady Madeleine,' said Miss Fane, looking back, 'do not you think I'm strong enough to walk as far as the New Spring? My uncle says, he is sure that I should be much better if I took more exercise, and I really want to see it. Can't we go to-morrow? I dare-say, as Albert played truant to-day, he will condescend to escort us.'

'Condescend, indeed! when I was a young man——'

'You a young man ! I don't believe you ever were a young man,' said Miss Fane, putting her small hand before a large open mouth, which was about to deliver the usual discourse on the degeneracy of the 'present day.'

The walk was most agreeable ; and, with the exception of one argument upon the principles of the picturesque, which Mr. Sherborne insisted upon Vivian's entering into, and in which, of course, that gentleman soon had the pleasure of proving himself candid by confessing himself confuted, it passed over without any disturbance from that most worthy and etymological individual. This was the first day, for nearly a year and a half, that Vivian Grey had joined with beings whose talents and virtues he respected, in calm and rational conversation ; this was nearly the first day in his life that Vivian Grey had conversed with any individuals, with no sinister views of self-advancement, and self-interest. He found his conversation, like his character, changed ;--treating of things, rather than men ; of nature, rather than society. To-day there was no false brilliancy to entrap the unwary ; no splendid paradoxes to astound the weak ; no poignant scandal to amuse the vile. He conversed calmly, without eagerness, and without passion ; and delivering with ability his conscientious opinion upon subjects which he had studied, and which he understood, he found that while he interested others, he had also been interested himself.

CHAPTER VIII

WHEN the walking party returned home, they found a crowd of idle domestics assembled opposite the house, round a group of equipages, consisting of two enormous crimson carriages, a britchka, and a large caravan, on all which vehicles the same coat of arms was most ostentatiously blazoned.

‘Some great arrival!’ said Miss Fane.

‘It must be the singular party that we watched this morning in the bazaar,’ said Lady Madeleine. ‘Oh, Violet! I’ve such a curious character to introduce you to, a particular friend of Mr. Grey’s, who wishes very much to have the honour of your acquaintance, MR. ESSPER GEORGE.’

‘What an odd name! Is he an Englishman?’

‘His appearance is still more singular than his title. You shall see him to-morrow.’

‘These carriages, then, belong to him?’

‘Not exactly,’ said Vivian.

In an hour’s time, the party again met at dinner in the saloon. By the joint exertions of Ernstorff, and Mr. St. George’s servants, the Baron, Vivian, and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, were now seated next to the party of Lady Madeleine Trevor.

‘My horses fortunately arrived from Frankfort this morning,’ said the Baron. ‘Mr. St. George and myself have been taking a ride very far up the valley. Has your Ladyship yet been to the Castle of Nassau?’

‘I am ashamed to say we have not. The expedition has been one of those plans, often arranged, and never executed.’

‘Oh! you should go by all means; it was one of my favourite spots: I took Mr. St. George there this morning. The ruin is one of the finest in Germany, which, as your Ladyship is well aware, is the land of ruins. An expedition to Nassau Castle would be a capital foundation for a picnic. Conceive, Miss Fane, a beautiful valley which was discovered by a knight, in the middle ages, following the track of a stag—how exquisitely romantic! The very incident vouches for its sweet seclusion. Cannot you imagine the wooded mountains, the old grey ruin, the sound of the unseen river? What more should we want, except agreeable company, fine music, and the best provisions, to fancy ourselves in Paradise?’

‘You certainly give a most glowing description,’ said Miss Fane. ‘Why, Mr. Grey, this lovely valley would be a model for the solitude we were planning this morning. I almost wish that your Excellency’s plan were practicable.’

‘I take the whole arrangement upon myself; there is not a difficulty. The ladies shall go on donkeys, or we might make a water excursion of it part of the way, and the donkeys can meet us at the pass near Stein, and then the gentlemen may walk; and if you fear the water at night, which is, perhaps, dangerous, why then the carriages may come round: and if your own be too heavy for mountain roads, my britchka is always at your command. You see there is not a difficulty.’

‘Not a difficulty,’ said Mr. St. George: ‘Madeleine, we only wait for your consent.’

‘Which will not be withheld a minute, Albert; but I think we had better put off the execution of our plan till June is a little more advanced. I must have a fine summer night for Violet.’

‘Well then, I hold the whole party present, engaged to follow my standard whenever I have permission from the high authority to unfold it,’ said the Baron, bowing to Lady Madeleine: ‘and lest, on cool reflection, I shall not possess influence enough to procure the appointment, I shall, like a skilful orator, take advantage of your feelings, which gratitude for this excellent plan must have already enlisted in my favour, and propose myself as Master of the Ceremonies.’ The Baron’s eye caught Lady Madeleine’s, as he uttered this, and something like a smile, rather of pity than derision, lighted up her face.

Here Vivian turned round to give some directions to an attendant, and to his horror, found Essper George standing behind his chair.

‘Is there anything your Highness wants?’

Essper was always particularly neat in his appearance, but to-day the display of clean linen was quite ostenta-

tious ; and to make the exposure still more terrific, he had, for the purpose of varying his costume, turned his Hussar-jacket inside out, and now appeared in a red coat, lined with green.

‘Who ordered you here, Sir !’

‘My duty.’

‘In what capacity do you attend ?’

‘As your Highness’ servant.’

‘I insist upon your leaving the room directly.’

Here Essper looked very suppliant, and began to pant like a hunted hare.

‘Ah ! my friend, Essper George,’ said Lady Madeleine, ‘are you there ? What’s the matter, is any one ill-treating you ?’

‘This then is Essper George !’ said Violet Fane, ‘what kind of creature can he possibly be ? Why, Mr. Grey, what’s the matter ?’

‘I’m merely discharging a servant at a moment’s warning, Miss Fane ; and if you wish to engage his constant attendance upon yourself, I have no objection to give him a character for the occasion.’

‘What do you want, Essper ?’ said Miss Fane.

‘I merely wanted to see whether your walk this morning had done your Highness’ appetite any good,’ answered Essper, looking very disconsolate ; ‘and so I thought I might make myself useful at the same time ; and though I don’t bring on the soup in a cocked hat, and carve the venison with a *couteau-de-chasse*,’ continued he, bowing very low to Ernstorff, who standing stiff behind his master’s chair, seemed utterly unaware that any other person in the room could experience a necessity ; ‘still I can change a plate, or hand the wine, without cracking the first, or drinking the second.’

‘And very good qualities too !’ said Miss Fane. ‘Come, Essper, you shall put your accomplishments into practice immediately, so change my plate.’

This Essper did with the greatest dexterity and quiet, displaying at the same time a small white hand, on the

back of which was marked a comet and three daggers. As he had the discretion not to open his mouth, and performed all his duties with great skill, his intrusion in a few minutes was not only pardoned but forgotten.

‘There has been a great addition to the visitors to-day, I see,’ said Lady Madeleine: ‘pray who are the new-comers?’

‘English,’ said the Chevalier, who, seated at a considerable distance from her Ladyship, had not spoken a word during the whole dinner.

‘I’ll tell you all about them,’ said the Baron. ‘This family is one of those, whose existence astounds the Continent much more than any of your mighty dukes and earls, whose fortunes, though colossal, can be conceived; and whose rank is understood. Mr. Fitzloom is a very different personage; for, thirty years ago he was a journeyman cotton-spinner: some miraculous invention in machinery entitled him to a patent, which has made him one of the most important landed proprietors in Great Britain. He has lately been returned a member for a great manufacturing city; and he intends to get over the two first years of his parliamentary career, by successively monopolising the accommodation of all the principal cities of France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; and by raising the price of provisions and post-horses through a track of five thousand miles. My information is authentic, for I had a casual acquaintance with him in England. There was some talk of a contract for supplying our army from England, and I saw Fitzloom often on the subject; I have spoken to him to-day. This is by no means the first of the species that we have had in Germany. I can assure you, that the plain traveller feels seriously the inconvenience of following such a caravan. Their money flows with such unwise prodigality, that real liberality ceases to be valued; and many of your nobility have complained to me, that, in their travels, they are now often expostulated with, on account of their parsimony, and taunted with the mis-

taken extravagance of a stocking-maker, or a porter-brewer.'

'What pleasure can such people find in travelling?' wondered the honourable and aristocratic Mr. St. George.

'As much pleasure, and more profit, than half the young men of the present day. In my time, travelling was undertaken on a very different system to what it is now. The English youth then travelled to frequent, what Lord Bacon says are "especially to be seen and observed—the Courts of Princes." You all travel now, it appears, to look at mountains, and catch cold in spouting trash on lakes by moonlight. You all think you know everything, none of you know anything.'

'But my dear Sir!' said the Baron, 'although I willingly grant you, that one of the great advantages of travel is the opportunity which it affords us of becoming acquainted with human nature in all its varieties, as developed by different climates, different customs, different governments, and consequently of becoming enabled to form an opinion as to the general capabilities of man; and which knowledge is, of course, chiefly gained where human beings most congregate—great cities, and as you say, the Courts of Princes: still, Sir, we must also not the less forget, that one of the great benefits of travel is, that it enlarges a man's experience, not only of his fellow-creatures in particular, but of Nature in general. And this not merely by enabling him to see a quantity and a variety of landscape, but by permitting him to watch Nature at various times and seasons. Many men pass through life without seeing a sunrise: a traveller cannot. If human experience be gained by seeing men in their undress, not only when they are conscious of the presence of others; natural experience is only to be acquired, by studying Nature at all periods, not merely when man is busy, and the beasts asleep.'

'But what's the use of this deep experience of Nature? Men are born to converse with men, not with stocks

and stones. He who has studied Le Sage, will be more happy and more successful in this world, than the man who muses over Rousseau.'

'There I agree with you, Mr. Sherborne, I have no wish to make man an anchorite. But as to the utility, the benefit of a thorough experience of Nature, it appears to me to be evident. It increases our stock of ideas——'

'So does everything.'

'But it does more than this, Sir. It calls into being new emotions, it gives rise to new and beautiful associations ; it creates that salutary state of mental excitement which renders our ideas more lucid, our conceptions more vivid, and our conclusions more sound. Can we too much esteem a study which, at the same time, renders our imagination more active, and our judgment more correct ?'

'Well, Sir, there may be something in what you say, but not much.'

'But my dear Sir,' said Lady Madeleine, 'if his Excellency will allow me to support an argument, which in his hands can require no assistance, do not you think that a full communion with Nature is calculated to elevate our souls, and purify our passions, to——'

'So is reading your Bible, my dear. A man's soul should always be elevated ; and his passions would then require little purification. If they are not, he might look at mountains for ever, but I should not trust him a jot more.'

'But, Sir,' continued the Baron, with unusual warmth ; 'I am clear that there are cases in which the influence of nature has worked what you profess to treat as an impossibility, or a miracle. I am myself acquainted with an instance of a very peculiar character. A few years ago, a gentleman of high rank found himself exposed to the unhappy suspicion of being connected with some disgraceful and dishonourable transactions, which took place in the highest circles of England. Unable to find any specific charge which he could meet, he added one

to the numerous catalogue of those unfortunate beings who have sunk in society, the victims of a surmise. He quitted England; and disgusted with the world, became the profligate which he had been falsely believed to be. At the house of Cardinal * * * * *, at Naples, celebrated even in that city for its midnight orgies, and not only for its bacchanal revels, this gentleman became a constant guest. He entered with a mad eagerness into every species of dissipation, although none gave him pleasure; and his fortune, his health, and the powers of his mind, were all fast vanishing. One night, one horrible night of frantic dissipation, a mock election of Master of the Sports, was proposed, and the hero of my tale had the splendid gratification of being chosen by unanimous consent to this new office. About two o'clock of the same night, he left the palace of the Cardinal, with an intention of returning. His way on his return led by the Chiaja, which you, Mr. Sherborne, who have been in Naples, perhaps remember. It was one of those nights which we witness only in the South. The blue and brilliant sea was sleeping beneath a cloudless sky; and the moon not only shed her light over the orange and lemon trees, which, springing from their green banks of myrtle, hung over the water, but added fresh lustre to the white domes, and glittering towers of the city; and flooded Vesuvius and the distant coast with light, as far even as Capua. The individual of whom I am speaking, had passed this spot on many nights when the moon was not less bright, the waves not less silent, and the orange trees not less sweet; but to-night—to-night something irresistible impelled him to stop. What a contrast to the artificial light, and heat, and splendour of the palace to which he was returning. He mused in silence. Would it not be wiser to forget the world's injustice, in gazing on a moonlit ocean, than in discovering in the illumined halls of Naples, the baseness of the crowd which forms the world's power? To enjoy the refreshing luxury of a fanning breeze which now arose, he turned and gazed

on the other side of the bay. Upon his right stretched out the promontory of Pausilippo ; there were the shores of Baiæ. But it was not only the loveliness of the land which now overcame his spirit ; he thought of those whose fame had made us forget even the beauty of these shores, in associations of a higher character, and a more exalted nature. He remembered the time when it was his only wish to be numbered among them. How had his early hopes been fulfilled ! What just account had he rendered to himself and to his country—that country that had expected so much—that self that had aspired even to more !

‘Day broke over the city, and found him still pacing down the Chiaja. He did not return to the Cardinal’s Palace ; and in two days he had left Naples. I can myself, from personal experience, aver that this individual is now an useful and honourable member of society. The world speaks of him in more flattering terms.’

The Baron spoke with great energy and animation. Violet Fane, who had been very silent, and who certainly had not encouraged by any apparent interest the previous conversation of the Baron, listened to this anecdote with the most eager attention ; but the effect it produced upon Lady Madeleine Trevor was most remarkable. At one moment Vivian thought that her Ladyship would have fainted.

‘Well !’ said Mr. Sherborne, who first broke silence, ‘I suppose you all think I’m wrong : I should like to hear your opinion, Mr. Grey, of this business. What do you think of the question ?’

‘Yes, pray give us your opinion, Mr. Grey,’ said Lady Madeleine with eagerness ; as if she thought that conversation would give her relief. The expression of her countenance did not escape Vivian.

• ‘I must side against you, Mr. Sherborne,’ said he ; ‘his Excellency has, I think, made out his point. It appears to me, however, that there is one great argument in favour of a study of Nature, and, indeed, of travelling,

which I think I have never seen used. It matures a man's mind, because it teaches him to distrust his judgment. He who finds that his preconceptions of natural appearances are erroneous, will in time suspect that his opinions of human nature may be equally incorrect; in short, that his moral conceptions may be as erroneous as his material ones.'

'Well! I suppose I must give up. It's very odd, I never form a hasty opinion, and yet I'm sometimes wrong. Never above owning it though—never above owning it—not like the young men of the present day, who are so confoundedly addicted to every species of error, that, for my own part, whenever they seem to suspect that they're wrong, I'm always sure that they're right.'

Here the party broke up. The promenade followed—the Archduke—his compliments—and courtiers—then came the Redoute. Mr. Hermann bowed low as the gentlemen walked up to the table. The Baron whispered Vivian that it was 'expected' that they should play, and give the tables a chance of winning back their money. Vivian staked with the carelessness of one who wishes to lose. As is generally the case under such circumstances, he again left the Redoute a most considerable winner. He parted with the Baron at his Excellency's door, and proceeded to the next, which was his own. Here he stumbled over something at the doorway, which appeared like a large bundle. He bent down with his light to examine it, and found Essper George, lying on his back, with his eyes half-open. It was some moments before Vivian perceived he was asleep; stepping gently over him, he entered his apartment.

CHAPTER IX

WHEN Vivian rose in the morning, a gentle tap at his door announced the presence of an early visitor, who, being desired to enter, appeared in the person of Essper George.

‘Does your Highness want anything?’ asked Essper, with a very submissive air.

Vivian stared at him for a moment, and then ordered him to come in.

‘I had forgotten, Essper, until this moment, that on returning to my room last night, I found you sleeping at my door. This also reminds me of your conduct in the saloon yesterday; and as I wish to prevent the repetition of such improprieties, I shall take this opportunity of informing you once for all, that if you do not in future conduct yourself with more discretion, I must apply to the Maître d’Hôtel. Now, Sir! what do you want?’

Essper was silent, and stood with his hands crossed on his breast, and his eyes fixed on the ground.

‘If you do not want anything, quit the room immediately.’

Here the singular being began to weep and sob most bitterly.

‘Poor fellow!’ thought Vivian, ‘I fear with all thy wit, and pleasantry, and powers, thou art, after all, but one of those capriccios, which Nature sometimes indulges in; merely to show how superior is her accustomed order to eccentricities, even accompanied with the rarest and most extraordinary powers.’

‘What is your wish, Essper?’ continued Vivian, in a kinder tone. ‘If there be any service, any real service, that I can do you, you will not find me backward. Are you in trouble? you surely are not in want?’

‘No, no, no!’ sobbed Essper; ‘I wish to be—to be

your Highness' servant,' here he hid his face in his hands.

'My servant! why surely if, as I have reason to suppose, you can maintain yourself with ease by your own exertions, it is not very wise conduct, voluntarily, to seek out a dependance upon any man. I'm afraid that you've been keeping company too much with the set of lazy, indolent, and insolent lacqueys, that are always loitering about these bathing places. Ernstorff's green livery and sword, have they not turned your brain, Essper?—how is it? tell me.'

'No, no, no! but I want to be your Highness' servant, only your Highness' servant, I'm tired of living alone.'

'But, Essper, remember, that to gain a situation as a servant, you must be a person of regular habits and certain reputation. I have myself a very good opinion of you, but I have myself seen very little of you, though more than any one here; and I am a person of a peculiar turn of mind. Perhaps there is not another individual in this house, who would even allude to the possibility of engaging a servant without a character.'

'Does the ship ask the wind for a character, when he bears her over the sea without hire, and without reward? and shall your Highness require a character from me, when I request to serve you without wages, and without pay?'

'Such an engagement, Essper, it would be impossible for me to enter into, even if I had need of your services, which at present I have not. But I tell you, frankly, that I see no chance of your suiting me. I should require an attendant of steady habits and experience; not one whose very appearance would attract attention when I wished to be unobserved, and acquire a notoriety for the master which he detests. There is little likelihood of my requiring any one's services, and with every desire to assist you, I warmly advise you to give up all idea of entering into a state of life, for which you are not the least suited. If, on consideration, you still retain your

wish of becoming a servant, and remain at the Baths with the expectation of finding a master, I recommend you to assume, at least for the moment, a semblance of regularity of habits. I have spoken to a great many ladies here, about your chamois bracelets, for which I think you will find a great demand. Believe me, your stall will be a better friend than your master. Now leave me.'

Essper remained one moment with his eyes still fixed on the ground; then walking very rapidly up to Vivian, he dropped on his knee, kissed his hand, and disappeared.

Mr. St. George breakfasted with the Baron, and the gentlemen called on Lady Madeleine early in the morning to propose a drive to Stein Castle; but her ladyship excused herself, and Vivian following her example, the Baron and Mr. St. George 'patronised' the Fitzlooms, because there was nothing else to do. Vivian again joined the ladies in their morning walk; but Violet Fane was not in her usual high spirits—she complained more than once of her cousin's absence; and this, connected with some other circumstances, gave Vivian the first impression that her feelings towards Mr. St. George were not merely those of a relation. As to the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, Vivian soon found that it was utterly impossible to be on intimate terms with a being without an idea. The Chevalier was certainly not a very fit representative of the gay, gallant, mercurial Frenchman: he rose very late, and employed the whole of the morning in reading the French newspapers, and playing billiards alternately with Prince Salvinski, and Count von Altenburgh.

These gentlemen, as well as the Baron, Vivian, and Mr. St. George, were to dine this day at the New House.

They found assembled, at the appointed hour, a party of about thirty individuals. The dinner was sumptuous—the wines superb. At the end of the banquet, the

company adjourned to another room, where play was proposed, and immediately commenced. His Imperial Highness did not join in the game; but, seated in a corner of the apartment, was surrounded by five or six aide-de-camps, whose only business was to bring their master constant accounts of the fortunes of the table, and the fate of his bets. His Highness did not stake.

Vivian soon found that the game was played on a very different scale at the New House to what it was at the Redoute. He spoke most decidedly to the Baron of his detestation of gambling, and expressed his unwillingness to play; but his Excellency, although he agreed with him in his sentiments, advised him to conform for the evening to the universal custom. As he could afford to lose, he consented, and staked boldly. This night very considerable sums were lost and won; but none returned home greater winners than Mr. St. George and Vivian Grey.

CHAPTER X

THE first few days of an acquaintance with a new scene of life, and with new characters, generally appear to pass very slowly; not certainly from the weariness which they induce, but rather from the keen attention which every little circumstance commands. When the novelty has worn off, when we have discovered that the new characters differ little from all others we have met before, and that the scene they inhabit is only another variety of the great order we have so often observed, we relapse into our ancient habits of inattention; we think more of ourselves, and less of those we meet; and musing our moments away in reverie, or in a vain attempt to cheat the coming day of the monotony of the present one, we begin to find that the various-vested Hours have bounded, and are bounding away in a course

at once imperceptible, uninteresting, and unprofitable. Then it is, that terrified at our nearer approach to the great river, whose dark windings it seems the business of all to forget, we start from our stupor to mourn over the rapidity of that collective sum of past-time, every individual hour of which we have in turn execrated for its sluggishness.

Vivian had now been three weeks at Ems, and the presence of Lady Madeleine Trevor and her cousin alone induced him to remain. Whatever was the mystery existing between her Ladyship and the Baron, and that there was some mystery Vivian could not for a moment doubt, his Excellency's efforts to attach himself to her party had been successful. The great intimacy subsisting between the Baron and her Ladyship's brother materially assisted in bringing about this result. For the first fortnight, the Baron was Lady Madeleine's constant attendant in the evening promenade, and often in the morning walk; and though there were few persons whose companionship could be preferred to that of Baron von Konigstein, still Vivian sometimes regretted that his friend and Mr. St. George had not continued their morning rides. The presence of his Excellency seemed always to have an unfavourable influence upon the spirits of Violet Fane, and the absurd and evident jealousy of Mr. St. George prevented Vivian from finding, in her agreeable conversation, some consolation for the loss of the sole enjoyment of Lady Madeleine's exhilarating presence. Mr. St. George had never met Vivian's advances with cordiality, and he now treated him with studied coldness.

The visits of the gentlemen to the New House had been frequent. The saloon of the Archduke was open every evening, and in spite of his great distaste for the fatal amusement which was there invariably pursued, Vivian found it utterly impossible to decline frequently attending, without subjecting his motives to painful misconception. His fortune, his extraordinary fortune did not desert him, and rendered his attendance still more a

duty. The Baron was not so successful as on his first evening's venture at the Redoute ; but Mr. St. George's star remained favourable. Of Essper George, Vivian had seen little. In passing through the Bazaar one morning, which he seldom did, he found to his surprise that the former conjuror had doffed his quaint costume, and was now attired in the usual garb of men of his condition of life. As Essper was busily employed at the moment, Vivian did not stop to speak to him ; but he received a most respectful bow. Once or twice also, he had met Essper in the Baron's apartments ; and he seemed to have become a very great favourite with the servants of his Excellency, and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, particularly with his former butt, Ernstorff, to whom he now behaved with the greatest deference.

I said, that for the first fortnight, the Baron's attendance on Lady Madeleine was constant. It was after this time that his Excellency began to slacken in his attentions. He first disappeared from the morning walks, and yet he did not ride ; he then ceased from joining the party at Lady Madeleine's apartments in the evening, and never omitted increasing the circle at the New House for a single night. The whole of the fourth week the Baron dined with his Imperial Highness. Although the invitation had been extended to all the gentlemen from the first, it had been agreed that it was not to be accepted, in order that the ladies should not find their party in the *Salon* less numerous or less agreeable. The Baron was the first to break through a rule which he had himself proposed ; and Mr. St. George and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs soon followed his example.

'Mr. Grey,' said Lady Madeleine one evening, as she was about to leave the gardens, 'we shall be happy to see you to-night if you are not engaged—Mr. Sherborne only will be with us.'

'I thank your Ladyship, but I fear that I am engaged,' said Vivian ; for the receipt of some letters from England made him little inclined to enter into society.

'Oh no! you can't be engaged,' said Violet Fane; 'pray come! pray come! I know you only want to go to that terrible New House; I wonder what St. George can find to amuse him there so keenly; I fear no good: men never congregate together for any beneficial purpose. I am sure, with all his gastronomical affections, he would not, if all were right, prefer the most *exquis* dinner in the world to our society. As it is, we scarcely see him a moment. I think, Mr. Grey, that you are the only one who has not deserted the *Salon*. For once, give up the New House—I'm sure you are not in your usual spirits; you will be more amused, more innocently amused at least, even if you go to sleep like Mr. Sherborne, than you will with playing at that disgusting Rouge-et-noir, with a crowd of suspicious-looking men in mustachios.'

Vivian smiled at Miss Fane's warmth, and was too flattered by the interest which she seemed to take in his welfare, to persist in his refusal, although she did dilate most provokingly on the absence of her cousin. Vivian soon joined them.

'Lady Madeleine is assisting me in a most important work, Mr. Grey. I am making drawings of the whole Valley of the Rhine; I know that you are very accurately acquainted with the scenery; you can, perhaps, assist me with your advice about this view of Old Hatto's Castle; I am sure I'm not quite right.'

Vivian was so completely master of every spot in the Rhine-land, that he had no difficulty in suggesting the necessary alterations. The drawings, unlike most young ladies' sketches, were vivid representations of the scenery which they professed to depict; and Vivian forgot his melancholy as he attracted the attention of the fair artist to points of interest, unknown or unnoticed by the Guide-books, and the Diaries.

'You must look forward to Italy with great interest, Miss Fane?'

'The greatest! I shall not, however, forget the Rhine, even among the Apennines.'

‘Our intended fellow-travellers, Lord Mounteney and his family, are already at Milan,’ said Lady Madeleine to Vivian; ‘we were to have joined their party—Lady Mounteney is a Trevor.’

‘I have had the pleasure of meeting Lord Mounteney in England, at Sir Berdmore Scrope’s: do you know him?’

‘Very slightly. The Mounteneys pass the winter at Rome, where I hope we shall join them. Do you know the family intimately?’

‘Mr. Ernest Clay, a nephew of his Lordship’s, I have seen a great deal of; I suppose, according to the adopted phraseology, I ought to describe him as my friend, although I am utterly ignorant where he is at present; and, although, unless he is himself extremely altered, there scarcely can be two persons who now more differ in their pursuits and tempers than ourselves.’

‘Ernest Clay! is he a friend of yours?—He’s somewhere on the continent now; I forget where; with some diplomatic appointment I think. Indeed, I’m sure of the fact, though I’m perfectly ignorant of the place, for it was through Mr. Trevor’s interest that he obtained it. I see you smile at the idea of Ernest Clay drawing up a protocol!’

‘Lady Madeleine, you have never read me Caroline Mounteney’s letter, as you promised,’ said Miss Fane; ‘I suppose full of raptures—“the Alps, and Apennines, the Pyrenæan, and the River Po.”’

‘By no means: the whole letter of four sides, double crossed, is filled with an account of the Ballet at La Scala; which, according to Caroline, is a thousand times more interesting than Mont-Blanc, or the Simplon.’

‘One of the immortal works of Vignano, I suppose,’ said Vivian; ‘he has raised the ballet of action to an equality with tragedy. I have heard my father mention the splendid effect of his *Vestale* and his *Otello*.’

‘And yet,’ said Violet Fane, ‘I do not like *Othello* to be profaned. It is not for operas and ballets. We require the thrilling words.’

‘It is very true ; yet Pasta’s acting in the opera, and in an opera acting is only a secondary point, was a grand performance ; and I have myself seldom witnessed a more masterly effect produced by any actor in the world, than I did a fortnight ago, at the Opera at Darmstadt, by Wild in *Othello*.’

‘I think the history of Desdemona is the most affecting of all tales,’ said Miss Fane.

‘The violent death of a woman, young, lovely, and innocent, is assuredly the most terrible of tragedies,’ observed Vivian ; ‘and yet, I know not why, I agree with you that Desdemona’s is the *most* affecting of fates—more affecting than those of Cordelia, or Juliet, or Ophelia.’

‘It is,’ said Lady Madeleine, ‘because we always contrast her misery with her previous happiness. The young daughter of Lear is the child of misfortune : Juliet has the anticipation, not the possession of happiness ; and the characters in *Hamlet* seem so completely the sport of a mysterious, but inexorable destiny, that human interest ceases for those whose conduct does not appear to be influenced by human passions. The exquisite poetry—the miraculous philosophy of *Hamlet*, will always make us read it with delight, and study it with advantage ; but, for Ophelia we do not mourn. We are interested in the fortunes of a fictitious character, because in witnessing a representation of a scene of human life, we form our opinion of the proper course to be pursued by the imaginary agents ; and our attention is excited, in order to ascertain whether their conduct and our opinions agree. But where the decree of fate is visibly being fulfilled, or the interference of a supernatural power is revealed, we know that human faculties can no longer be of avail ; that prudence can no longer protect—courage no longer defend. We witness the tragedy with fear, but not with sympathy.’

‘I have often asked myself,’ said Miss Fane, ‘which is the most terrible destiny for a young woman to endure :—to meet death after a life of trouble, anxiety, and

suffering ; or suddenly to be cut off in the enjoyment of all things that make life delightful ; with a heart too pure to be tainted by their possession, and a mind too much cultivated to over-appreciate their value ? ’

‘For my part,’ said Vivian, ‘in the last instance, I think that death can scarcely be considered an evil. The pure spirit would have only to sleep until the Great Day ; and then—as Dryden has magnificently said, “wake an angel still.” How infinitely is such a destiny to be preferred to that long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering, at the end of which men are generally as unwilling to die as at the commencement ! ’

‘And yet,’ said Miss Fane, ‘there is something fearful in the idea of sudden death.’

‘Very fearful ! ’ muttered Vivian ; ‘very fearful in some cases ’ ; for he thought of one whom he had sent to his great account before his time.

‘Violet, my dear ! ’ said Lady Madeleine, in a very agitated voice ; ‘have you finished your drawing of the Bingenloch ? ’ But Miss Fane would not leave the subject.

‘Very fearful in *all* cases, Mr. Grey. How few of us are prepared to leave this world without warning ! And if from youth, or sex, or natural disposition, or from the fortunate union of the influence of all these three, a few may chance to be better fitted for the great change than their companions, still, I always think that in those cases in which we view our fellow-creatures suddenly departing from this world, apparently without a bodily or mental pang, there must be a moment of suffering, which none of us can understand ; suffering, occasioned by a consciousness of immediately meeting death in the very flush of life, and earthly thoughts—a moment of suffering, which, from its intense and novel character, may appear an eternity of anguish. I shall, perhaps, not succeed in conveying my peculiar feeling on this subject to you. I have always looked upon such an end as the most terrible of dispensations.’

‘I enter into your feelings,’ answered Vivian ; ‘although the light in which you view this subject is new to me. Terrible, however, as we may universally consider the event of a sudden death, I still do not believe that a long and painful illness ever exempts man from the suffering which you mention ; but that he always quits life with the same unwillingness to die.’

‘I cannot agree with you, Mr. Grey, in this opinion, which you seem to entertain of the inefficacy of “a long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering.” From my own experience, I should say that it robbed death of all its terrors. Death is most dreadful at a distance—illness weakens the mind in a wise proportion with the body ; and therefore, at a certain period, the feelings are too enervated by debility, or too blunted by personal suffering, to experience *that* which in health appears the greatest trial in our dissolution—the parting with our friends. In the enjoyment of every pleasure which health and affluence can afford, I confess that it appears most dreadful to encounter the agonies of disease ; and parting with all we love here, to sink into the grave, and be forgotten by those of whose every thought, when living, we seemed to be the centre. But when we are worn out with pain, the selfishness of our nature makes us look upon those around us, with little more interest than as the ministers of our wants. We forget all but the present suffering, and only look forward to the future as a release from it. If ever you have experienced a long and dangerous illness, Mr. Grey, I am confident that, on reflection, you will agree with me.’

‘My dear Violet,’ said Lady Madeleine ; ‘I thought that Mr. Grey came here to-night to forget his melancholy. These surely are subjects which do not make men gay.’

‘I assure you, Lady Madeleine,’ said Vivian, ‘that I take great—the greatest interest in this subject. I have endured a most dangerous illness, Miss Fane, but it was not one of the kind you allude to. It was a violent fever, and I was not sensible of my disease till its danger was

past. I have no very clear conception of my state of mind when I recovered ; but I think, if I remember right, that I dreaded life as much as I feared death.'

'That was a peculiar case,' said Miss Fane ; 'a case in which death, from the state of mind, could have had no terrors. Of course my argument refers to the generality of long and dangerous illnesses, when the patient is only too sensible of the daily increasing debility. For myself, I distinctly remember being reduced to such fearful weakness, that the physicians and nurses round my bed believed me dying, if not dead ; and from my complete inanition, entirely past a knowledge of what was going on around me. They were deceived, however, in this. I heard them say that I was dying ; more than once they thought that all was over ; but it produced no emotion in my mind,—neither fear, nor sorrow, nor hope. I felt my breath fluttering fainter, and fainter. I could not move even my finger ; and I thought indeed that all would soon be over ; but it brought no pang for the sufferers who surrounded my bed, no anxiety, or desire for myself. At last I sunk into a deep sleep ; and after a length of time I awoke with quickened feelings. My natural affections returned, and then I had a strong longing for life. Here I am now, enjoying excellent health, in spite of my dear physician's grave looks,' said Miss Fane, putting her arm round Lady Madeleine's neck ; 'and not only health, but every blessing which youth can bring me. Nevertheless, dreading death as I do now, with the feelings of health and a happy life, I sometimes almost regret that I ever awoke from that perfect calm of every earthly passion.'

As Vivian was thinking that Violet Fane was the most beautiful creature he had ever beheld, Lady Madeleine Trevor bent down and kissed her forehead. Her Ladyship's large blue eyes were full of tears. A woman's eye never seems more bright than when it glances through a tear—as the light of a star seems more brilliant when sparkling on a wave.

‘Violet, my dear,’ said her Ladyship, ‘let us talk no more of death.’

‘Who *was* talking of death?’ said Mr. Sherborne, waking from a refreshing nap; ‘I’m sure I wasn’t. Let me see—I forget what my last observation was; I think I was saying, Lady Madeleine, that a little music would refresh us all. Violet, my dear, will you play me one of my favourites?’

‘What shall it be, dear Sir? I really think I may sing to-night. What think you, Lady Madeleine? I have been silent a fortnight.’ So saying, Miss Fane sat down to the piano.

Mr. Sherborne’s favourite ensued. It was a lively air, calculated to drive away all melancholy feeling, and cherishing those bright sunny views of human life which the excellent old man had invariably professed. But Rossini’s Muse did not smile to-night upon her who invoked its gay spirit; and ere Lady Madeleine could interfere, Violet Fane had found more congenial emotions in one of Weber’s prophetic symphonies.

‘Oh! Music! miraculous art, that makest the poet’s skill a jest; revealing to the soul inexpressible feelings, by the aid of inexplicable sounds! A blast of thy trumpet, and millions rush forward to die: a peal of thy organ, and uncounted nations sink down to pray. Mighty is thy three-fold power!

First, thou canst call up all elemental sounds, and scenes, and subjects, with the definiteness of reality. Strike the lyre! Lo! the voice of the winds—the flash of the lightning—the swell of the wave—the solitude of the valley!

Then thou canst speak to the secrets of a man’s heart as if by inspiration. Strike the lyre! Lo!—our early love—our treasured hate—out withered joy—our flattering hope!

And, lastly, by thy mysterious melodies, thou canst recall man from all thought of this world and of himself—bringing back to his soul’s memory, dark but delightful

recollections of the glorious heritage which he has lost, but which he may win again. Strike the lyre ! Lo ! Paradise, with its palaces of inconceivable splendour, and its gates of unimaginable glory !

When Vivian left the apartment of Lady Madeleine, he felt no inclination to sleep ; and instead of retiring to rest, he bent his steps towards the gardens. It was a rich summer night ; the air, recovered from the sun's scorching rays, was cool—nor chilling. The moon was still behind the mountains ; but the dark blue heavens were studded with innumerable stars, whose tremulous light quivered on the face of the river. All human sounds had ceased to agitate ; and the note of the nightingale, and the rush of the waters, banished monotony without disturbing reflection. But not for reflection had Vivian Grey deserted his chamber : his heart was full—but of indefinable sensations ; and forgetting the world in the intenseness of his emotions, he felt too much to think.

How long he had been pacing by the side of the river he knew not, when he was awakened from his reverie by the sound of voices. He looked up, and saw lights moving at a distance. The party at the New House had just broke up. He stopped beneath a branching elm-tree for a moment, that the sound of his steps might not attract their attention ; and at this very instant the garden gate opened, and closed with great violence. The figure of a man approached. As he passed Vivian, the moon rose up from above the brow of the mountain, and lit up the countenance of the Baron. Despair was stamped on his distracted features.

CHAPTER XI

WHEN Vivian awoke in the morning, he found that the intenseness of his emotions had subsided ; and that his sensations were not quite so indefinite as on the preceding night :—he found himself in love—with whom, however, was perhaps still doubtful. The image of Violet Fane had made his dreams delicious ; but it must be confessed that the eidolon sometimes smiled with the features of Lady Madeleine Trevor :—but that he looked on the world with new feelings, and a changed spirit,—with hope, and almost with joy,—was certain. The sweet summer morning had succeeded to the soft summer night. The sun illumined as yet only the tops of the western mountains ; and the morning breeze, unheated by his beams, told that it was June by the odours which it wafted around. At such a moment the sense of existence alone is happiness ; but to Vivian it seemed that the sun was about to light up a happier world, and that the sweet wind blew from Paradise.

Young Love ! young Love, ‘thy birth was of the womb of morning dew, and thy conception of the joyous prime !’—so Spenser sings ; and there are few, perhaps, who, on this subject, have not scribbled some stray stanzas in their time, if not as sweet, it may be more sincere. They will understand feelings which none can describe. How miraculous is that power, which, in an instant, can give hope to the desperate, and joy to the forlorn ; which, without an argument, can vanquish all philosophy ; and without a gibe silence all wit ; which turns the light-hearted serious, while it makes the sorrowful smile ; which is braver than courage, and yet more cautious than fear ; which can make the fool outwit wisdom, and wisdom envy the fool !

It was in one of those sweet bowers, with which, as we have before mentioned, the gardens of Ems wisely abound, that Vivian Grey had spent more than three hours, unconscious of the passing of a moment. A rustling among the trees first attracted his attention; and on looking quickly up the winding walk, he thought he saw Essper George vanish in the shrubbery. Was he watched?—But he soon forgot his slight anger in another fit of abstraction, from which he was wakened, as he imagined by the same sound. ‘This time I’ll catch you,’ thought Vivian. He jumped suddenly up, and nearly knocked down Lady Madeleine Trevor, who had entered the arbour.

‘I hope I’ve not disturbed you, Mr. Grey,’ said her Ladyship, who saw that he was confused; ‘I am in want of an escort, and I have come to reclaim a truant knight. You forget that I had your pledge yesterday, to accompany me to the New Spring.’

Vivian made a violent struggle to recover himself, and began to talk a quantity of nonsense to her Ladyship, by way of apology for his negligence, and thanks for her kindness; Lady Madeleine listened, with her usual gentle smile, to a long and muttered discourse, in which the words, ‘Essper George, Miss Fane, and fine morning,’ were alone intelligible.

‘Shall we have the pleasure of Miss Fane and Mr. Sherborne’s company in our walk to-day?’ asked Vivian.

‘No! they are not going with us,’ said Lady Madeleine. ‘You will join our party at the Archduke’s to-night, I hope, Mr. Grey,’ continued her Ladyship.

‘Yes—I don’t know:—that is, are you going, Lady Madeleine?’

‘Why, my dear Sir, isn’t this the fête night?’

‘Ah! ah! I understand—I remember—it will give me the greatest pleasure to join the party at your Ladyship’s rooms.’

Lady Madeleine looked very earnestly at her companion,

and then talked about the weather, and the beauty of summer, and the singing of birds, and a thousand other little topics, by which she soon restored him to his usual state of mind. In a quarter of an hour Vivian had quite recovered his senses ; and only regretted the part which he necessarily took in the conversation, because it prevented him from listening to the soft tones of her Ladyship's voice, who he thought to-day looked a thousand times more beautiful than ever. He began also to think that he should like to walk to the New Spring alone with her every morning of his life.

Vivian had been so occupied by his own feelings, that he and his companion had completed nearly half their walk, before it struck him that something was dwelling on the mind of Lady Madeleine. In the midst of the gayest conversation, her features more than once appeared to be in little accordance with the subject of discussion ; and her voice often broke off abruptly at the commencement of a sentence—some sentence which it seemed she had not courage to finish.

‘Mr. Grey,’ said her Ladyship, suddenly ; ‘I cannot conceal any longer, that I am thinking of a very different subject to the Archduke’s ball. As you form part of my thoughts at this moment, I shall not hesitate to disburthen my mind to you ; although, perhaps, I run the risk of being considered at the same time both impertinent and officious. Understand me, however, distinctly, that whatever I may say, you are not, for a moment, to believe that I am ostentatiously presuming to give you advice. There are many points, however, to which the hint or intimation of a friend may attract our attention with advantage ; and although our conversation to-day may not be productive of any to you, believe me that I should very much grieve, if my gentle suggestion were construed into an unwarrantable interference.’

‘Anything that Lady Madeleine Trevor can do, surely cannot be construed by any one as unwarrantable—anything that Lady Madeleine Trevor can be kind enough

to address to me, must always be received with the most respectful, the most grateful attention.'

'I wish not to keep you in suspense, Mr. Grey. It is of the mode of life which I see my brother, which I see you pursuing here, that I wish to speak,' said her Ladyship, with an agitated voice. 'May I—may I *really* speak with freedom?'

'Anything—everything, with the most perfect unreserve and confidence,' answered Vivian.

'You are aware, Mr. Grey, that Ems is not the first place at which I have met Baron von Konigstein.'

'I am not ignorant that his Excellency has been in England.'

'It cannot have escaped you, Mr. Grey, that I acknowledged his acquaintance with reluctance.'

'I should judge, with the *greatest* reluctance, Lady Madeleine.'

'And yet it was with still more reluctance, Mr. Grey, that I prevailed upon myself to believe you were his friend. I experienced the greatest delight, when you told me how short and accidental had been your acquaintance. I have experienced the greatest pain in witnessing to what that acquaintance has led; and it is with extreme sorrow, for my own weakness, in not having had courage to speak to you before, and with a hope of yet benefiting you, that I have been induced to speak to you now.'

'Lady Madeleine, I trust there is no cause either for your sorrow or your fear; but much, much cause for my gratitude. Do not fear to be explicit.'

'Now that I have prevailed upon myself to speak, Mr. Grey, and have experienced from you the reception that I gave you credit for; do not fear that there will be any want of openness on my part. I have observed the constant attendance of yourself, and my brother, at the New House with the greatest anxiety. I have seen too much of the world, not to be perfectly aware of the danger—the terrific danger, which young men, and young men of honour, must always experience at such

places. Alas! I have seen too much of Baron von Konigstein, not to know that at such places especially, his acquaintance is fatal. The evident depression of your spirits yesterday, determined me on a step which I have for the last few days been considering. Your abstraction this morning frightened me. I can learn nothing from my brother. I fear that I am even now too late; but I trust, that whatever may be your situation, you will remember, Mr. Grey, that you have friends; that you will decide on nothing rash.'

'Lady Madeleine,' said Vivian, 'I have too much respect for your feelings to stop even one moment to express the gratitude—the pride—the honourable pride, which your generous conduct allows me to feel. This moment repays me for a year of agony. I affect not to misunderstand one syllable of your meaning. My opinion, my detestation of the gaming-table has always, and must always, be the same. I do assure you this, and all things, upon my honour. Far from being involved, my cheek burns while I confess, that I am master of a considerable sum—a most considerable sum, acquired by this unhallowed practice. But for this I am scarcely to be blamed. You are yourself aware of the singular fortune which awaited my first evening at Ems; that fortune was continued at the New House, the very first day I dined with his Highness, and when, unexpectedly, I was forced to play; that fatal fortune has rendered my attendance at the New House absolutely necessary. I found that it was impossible to keep away, without subjecting myself to the most painful observations. I need scarcely say now, that my depression of yesterday was occasioned by the receipt of letters from England; and as to my abstraction this morning, believe me, Lady Madeleine, it was not a state of mind which grew out of any disgust to the world, or its inhabitants. I am ashamed of having spoken so much about myself, and so little about those for whom you are more interested. As far as I can judge, you have no cause, at present, for any serious uneasiness with regard

to Mr. St. George. You may, perhaps, have observed that we are not very intimate, and therefore I cannot speak with any precision as to the state of his fortunes ; but I have reason to believe that they are by no means unfavourable. And now for the Baron, Lady Madeleine.'

'Yes, yes !'

'I hardly know what I am to infer from your observations respecting him. I certainly should infer something extremely bad, were not I conscious, that, after the experience of five weeks, I, for one, have nothing to complain of him. The Baron, certainly, is fond of play—plays high, indeed. He has not had equal fortune at the New House as at the Redoute ; at least I imagine so, for he has given me no cause to believe, in any way, that he is a loser ; and I need not tell Lady Madeleine Trevor, that at the table of an Archduke, losses are instantly paid.'

'Now that I know the truth—the joyful truth, Mr. Grey,' said her Ladyship, with great earnestness and animation ; 'I feel quite ashamed of my boldness ; must I say my suspicions ? But if you could only understand the relief, the ease, the happiness, I feel at this moment, I am sure you would not wonder that I prevailed upon myself to speak to you. It may still be in my power, however, to prevent evil.'

'Yes—yes, certainly ! After what has passed, I would, without any fear of my motives being misinterpreted, submit to your Ladyship, that the wisest course now, would be to speak to me frankly respecting von Konigstein ; and if you are aware of anything which has passed in the circles in England, of a nature which may render it more prudent for——'

'Oh ! stop, stop !' said Lady Madeleine, in the greatest agitation. Vivian was silent, and many minutes elapsed before his companion again spoke. When she did, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and her tones were low ; but her voice was calm, and steady. It was evident that she had mastered her emotions.

‘I am going to accept, Mr. Grey, the confidence which you have proffered me. I feel, I am convinced, that it is due to you now, that I should say all ; but I do not affect to conceal that I speak, even now, with reluctance—an effort, and it will soon be over. It is for the best.’ Lady Madeleine paused one moment, and then resumed with a firm voice :—

‘Upwards of six years, Mr. Grey, have now passed since Baron von Konigstein was appointed Minister to London, from the Court of ———. Although apparently young for such an important mission, he had already eminently distinguished himself as a diplomatist ; and with all the advantages of brilliant talents, various accomplishments, rank, reputation, person, and a fascinating address, I need not tell you, that he immediately became of consideration, even in the highest circles. Mr. Trevor—I was then just married—was at this period high in office, and was constantly in personal communication with the Baron. They became intimate, and his Excellency our constant guest. The Baron had the reputation of being a man of pleasure. Few men ever existed, for whose indiscretions there could be a greater excuse ; nor had anything ever transpired which could induce us to believe, that Baron von Konigstein could be guilty of anything, but an indiscretion. At this period a relation, and former ward of Mr. Trevor’s, a young man of considerable fortune, and one whom we all most fondly loved, resided in our family. Trevor, and myself, considered him as our brother. With this individual Baron von Konigstein formed a strong friendship ; they were seldom apart. Our relation was not exempted from the failings of all young men. He led a very dissipated, an alarmingly dissipated life ; but he was very young ; and, as unlike most relations, we never allowed any conduct on his part, for an instant to banish him from our society ; we trusted that the contrast which his own family afforded to his usual companions, would in time render his tastes more refined, and his

habits less irregular. We had now known Baron von Konigstein for upwards of a year and a half, most intimately. Nothing had transpired during this period to induce Mr. Trevor to alter the opinion which he had entertained of him from the first ; he believed him to be a man of the purest honour, and, in spite of a few imprudencies, of the correctest principles. Whatever might have been my own opinion of his Excellency at this period, I had no reason to doubt the natural goodness of his disposition ; and though I could not hope that he was one who would assist us in our plans for the reformation of Augustus, I still rejoiced to observe, that in the Baron he would at least find a companion very different from the unprincipled and selfish beings by whom he was too often surrounded. Something occurred at this time, Mr. Grey, which it is necessary for me only to allude to ; but which placed Baron von Konigstein, according to his own declaration, under the most lasting obligations to myself. In the warmth of his heart he asked if there was any real and important service which he could do me. I took advantage of the moment to speak to him about our young friend ; I detailed to him all our anxieties ; he anticipated all my wishes, and promised to watch over him ; to be his guardian ; his friend—his real friend. Mr. Grey,' continued her Ladyship, 'I struggle to restrain my feelings ; but the recollections of this period of my life are so painful, that for a moment I must stop to recover myself.'

For a few minutes they walked on in silence ; Vivian did not speak, his heart was too full ; and when her Ladyship resumed her tale, he, unconsciously, pressed her arm.

'Mr. Grey, I study to be brief. About three months after the Baron had given me the pledge which I mentioned, Mr. Trevor was called up at an early hour one morning with the alarming intelligence, that his late ward was supposed to be at the point of death at a neighbouring hotel. He instantly accompanied the

messenger, and on the way the fatal truth was broken to him—our young friend had committed suicide ! He had been playing all night with one whom I cannot now name.’ Here Lady Madeleine’s voice died away, but with a struggle she again spoke firmly.

‘I mean, Mr. Grey—with the Baron—some foreigners also, and an Englishman—all intimate friends of von Konigstein, and scarcely known to Captain ——, I mean the deceased. Our friend had been the only sufferer ; he had lost his whole fortune—and more than his fortune : and, with a heart full of despair and remorse, had, with his own hand, terminated his unhappy life. The whole circumstances were so suspicious, that public attention was keenly attracted, and Mr. Trevor spared no exertion to bring the offenders to punishment. The Baron had the hardihood to call upon us the next day ; admittance was, of course, refused. He wrote the most violent letters, protesting by all that was sacred that he was innocent ; that he was asleep during most of the night, and accusing the others who were present of a conspiracy. The unhappy business now attracted universal attention. Its consequence on me was an alarming illness of a most unfortunate kind ; I was therefore prevented from interfering, or, indeed, knowing anything that took place ; but Trevor informed me that the Baron was involved in a correspondence in the public prints ; that the accused parties recriminated, and that finally he was convinced that von Konigstein, if there were any difference, was, if possible, the most guilty. However this might be, he soon obtained his recall from his own Government. He wrote to myself, and to Trevor before he left England ; but I was too ill to hear of his letters, until Mr. Trevor informed me that he had returned them unopened. And now, Mr. Grey, I am determined to give utterance to that which as yet has always died upon my lips—the victim—the unhappy victim was the brother of Miss Fane !’

‘Oh, God !’

‘And Mr. St. George,’ continued Vivian, ‘Mr. St. George knowing all this, which surely he must have done; how came he to tolerate, for an instant, the advances of such a man?’

‘My brother,’ said Lady Madeleine, ‘is a very good, a very excellent young man, with a kind heart and warm feelings; but my brother has not much knowledge of the world, and he is too honourable himself ever to believe that what he calls a gentleman can be dishonest. My brother was not in England when the unhappy event took place, and of course the various circumstances have not made the same impression upon him, as upon us. He has heard of the affair only from me; and young men, Mr. Grey, young men too often imagine that women are apt to exaggerate in matters of this nature, which, of course, few of us can understand. Von Konigstein had not the good feeling, or perhaps had not the power, connected as he was with the Archduke, to affect ignorance of our former acquaintance, or to avoid a second one. I was obliged formally to introduce him to my brother. I was quite perplexed how to act. I thought of writing to von Konigstein the next morning, a letter—a calm letter; impressing upon him, without the expression of any hostile feeling, the utter impossibility of the acquaintance being renewed: but this proceeding involved a thousand difficulties. How was a man of his distinction—a man, who not only from his rank, but from his disposition, is always a remarkable, and a remarked character, wherever he may be,—how could he account to the Archduke, and to his numerous friends, for his not associating with a party with whom he was perpetually in contact? Explanations—painful explanations, and worse, much worse than these must have been the consequence. I could hardly expect him to leave Ems; it was, perhaps, out of his power: and for Miss Fane to leave Ems at this moment, was most strenuously prohibited by our physician. While I was doubtful and deliberating, the conduct of von Konigstein

himself prevented me from taking any step whatever. Feeling all the awkwardness of his situation, he seized, with eagerness, the opportunity of becoming intimate with a member of the family whom he had not before known. His amusing conversation, and insinuating address, immediately enlisted the feelings of my brother in his favour. You know yourself that the very morning after their introduction they were riding together. As they became more intimate, the Baron boldly spoke to St. George in confidence of his acquaintance with us in England, and of the unhappy circumstances which led to its termination. St. George was deceived by this seeming courage and candour. He has become the Baron's friend, and has adopted his version of the unhappy story ; and as the Baron has had too much delicacy to allude to the affair in a defence of himself to me, he calculated that the representations of St. George, who he was conscious, would not preserve the confidence which von Königstein has always intended him to betray, would assist in producing in my mind an impression in his favour. The Neapolitan story which he told the other day at dinner, was of himself ; relating it, as he might with truth, of a gentleman of rank, who was obliged to leave England, he blinded all present, except Miss Fane and myself. I confess to you, Mr. Grey, that though I have not for a moment doubted the guilt of the Baron, still I was weak enough to consider that his desire to become reconciled to me was at least an evidence of a repentant heart ; and the Neapolitan story deceived me. Women are so easily to be deceived. We always hail with such credulous pleasure the prospect of the amendment of a fellow-creature. Actuated by these feelings, and acting as I thought wisest under existing circumstances, I ceased to discourage the attentions of the Baron to myself and my friends. Your acquaintance, which we all desired to cultivate, was another reason for enduring his presence. His subsequent conduct has undeceived me : I am convinced now, not only of his former guilt, but also that he is

not changed ; and that with his accustomed talent, he has been acting a part which for some reason or other he has no longer any object in maintaining. Both Mr. Sherborne and myself have remonstrated with my brother ; but the only consequence of our interference has been, that he has quarrelled with his uncle, and treated both my own and Miss Fane's interposition with indifference or irritability.'

'And Miss Fane,' said Vivian, 'she must know all?'

'She knows nothing in detail ; she was so young at the time, that we had no difficulty in keeping the particular circumstances of her brother's death, and the sensation which it excited, a secret from her. As she grew up, I have thought it proper that the mode of his death should no longer be concealed from her ; and she has learnt from some incautious observations of St. George's, enough to make her look upon the Baron with horror. It is for Violet,' continued Lady Madeleine, 'that I have the severest apprehensions. For the last fortnight her anxiety for her cousin has produced an excitation of mind, which I look upon with more dread than anything that can happen to her. She has intreated both Mr. Sherborne and myself, to speak to St. George, and also to you, Mr. Grey ; and, since our unsuccessful interference with my brother, we have been obliged to have recourse to deceit to calm her mind, and banish her apprehensions. Mr. Sherborne has persuaded her, that, at the New House, play is seldom pursued ; and when pursued, that the limit is very moderate. The last few days she has become more easy and serene. She accompanies us to-night ; the weather is so beautiful that the night air is scarcely to be feared ; and a gay scene will, I am convinced, have a favourable influence upon her spirits. Your depression last night did not, however, escape her notice. Once more let me say how I rejoice at hearing what you have told me. I have such confidence in your honour, Mr. Grey, that I unhesitatingly believe all that you have said. I have such confidence in your sense and courage, Mr.

Grey, that I have now no apprehensions for the future. For God's sake, watch St. George. I have no fear for yourself.'

Here they had reached home: Vivian parted with her Ladyship at the door of her apartments, and pressed her hand as he refused to come in. He hastened to the solitude of his own chamber. His whole frame was in a tumult; he paced up and down his room with wild steps; he pressed his hand to his eyes to banish the disturbing light; and tried to call up the image of her who was lately speaking—of her, for whom alone he now felt that he must live. But what chance had he of ever gaining this glorious creature? what right? what claims? His brow alternately burnt with maddening despair, and exciting hope. How he cursed himself for his foul sacrifice of his talents! those talents, the proper exercise, the wise administration of which, might have placed happiness in his power,—the enjoyment of a state of feeling, whose existence he had once ridiculed, because his imperfect moral sense was incapable of comprehending it,—once, and once only, it darted across his mind, that feelings of mere friendship could not have dictated this confidence, and occasioned this anxiety on her part; but the soft thought dwelt on his soul only for an instant—as the shadow of a nightingale flits over the moonlit moss.

CHAPTER XII

THE company at the Archduke's fête was *most select*; that is to say, it consisted of every single person who was then at the Baths: those who had been presented to his Highness, having the privilege of introducing any number of their friends; and those who had no friend to introduce them, purchasing tickets at an enormous price from Cracowsky—the wily Polish Intendant. The entertainment was most imperial; no expense,

and no exertion were spared to make the hired lodging-house look like an hereditary palace; and for a week previous to the great evening, the whole of the neighbouring town of Wiesbaden, the little capital of the duchy, had been put under contribution. What a harvest for Cracowsky!—What a commission from the *restaurateur* for supplying the refreshments!—What a percentage on hired mirrors and dingy hangings!

The Archduke, covered with orders, received every one with the greatest condescension, and made to each of his guests a most flattering speech. His suite, in new uniforms, simultaneously bowed directly the flattering speech was finished.

‘Madame von Furstenburg, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Madame von Furstenburg, I trust that your amiable and delightful family are quite well.—[The party passed on.] Cravatscheff!’ continued his Highness, inclining his head round to one of his aide-de-camps; ‘Cravatscheff! a very fine woman is Madame von Furstenburg. There are few women whom I more admire than Madame von Furstenburg.’

‘Prince Salvinski, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Poland honours no one more than Prince Salvinski. Cravatscheff! a remarkable bore is Prince Salvinski. There are few men of whom I have a greater terror than Prince Salvinski.’

‘Baron von Konigstein, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Baron von Konigstein, I have not yet forgot the story of the fair Venetian. Cravatscheff! an uncommonly pleasant fellow is Baron von Konigstein. There are few men whose company I more enjoy than Baron von Konigstein’s.’

‘Count von Altenburgh, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. You will not forget to give me your opinion

of my Austrian troop. Cravatscheff! a very good billiard player is Count von Altenburgh. There are few men whose play I'd sooner bet upon than Count von Altenburgh's.

'Lady Madeleine Trevor, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Miss Fane, your servant—Mr. Sherborne—Mr. St. George—Mr. Grey. Cravatscheff! a most splendid woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor. There is no woman whom I more admire than Lady Madeleine Trevor; and Cravatscheff! Miss Fane, too! a remarkably fine girl is Miss Fane.'

The great saloon of the New House afforded excellent accommodation for the dancers. It opened on the gardens, which, though not very large, were tastefully laid out; and were this evening brilliantly illuminated with coloured lamps. In the smaller saloon, the Austrian troop amused those who were not fascinated by waltz or quadrille, with acting proverbs: the regular dramatic performance was thought too heavy a business for the evening. There was sufficient amusement for all; and those who did not dance, and to whom proverbs were no novelty, walked and talked, stared at others, and were themselves stared at; and this perhaps was the greatest amusement of all. Baron von Konigstein did certainly to-night look neither like an unsuccessful gamester, nor a designing villain. Among many who were really amusing, he was the most so; and apparently without the least consciousness of it, attracted the admiration of all. To the Trevor party he had attached himself immediately, and was constantly at her Ladyship's side, introducing to her, in the course of the evening, his own and Mr. St. George's particular friends—Mr. and Mrs. Fitzloom. Among many smiling faces, Vivian Grey's was clouded; the presence of the Baron annoyed him. When they first met, he was conscious that he was stiff and cool—extraordinarily cool. One moment's reflection convinced him of the folly of his conduct, and he made a struggle to be

very civil—extraordinarily civil. In five minutes' time he had involuntarily insulted the Baron, who stared at his friend, and evidently did not comprehend him.

'Grey,' said his Excellency, very quietly, 'you're not in a good humour to-night. What's the matter? This is not at all a temper to come to a *fête* in. What! won't Miss Fane dance with you?' asked the Baron, with an arch smile.

'I wonder what can induce your Excellency to talk such nonsense!'

'Your Excellency!—by Jove! that's good, Excellency! why, what the deuce is the matter with the man? It is Miss Fane then—eh?'

'Baron von Konigstein, I wish you to understand——'

'My dear fellow, I never could understand anything. I think you have insulted me in a most disgraceful manner, and I positively must call you out, unless you promise to dine at my rooms with me to-morrow, to meet de Boëffleurs.'

'I cannot.'

'Why not? you've no engagement with Lady Madeleine I know, for St. George has agreed to come.'

'Yes?'

'De Boëffleurs leaves Ems next week. It is sooner than he expected, and I wish to have a quiet evening together before he goes. I should be very vexed if you were not there. We've scarcely been enough together lately. What with the New House in the evening, and riding parties in the morning, and those Fitzloom girls, with whom St. George is playing a most foolish game—he'll be taken in now, if he's not on his guard—we really never meet, at least not in a quiet friendly way; and so now, will you come?'

'St. George is positively coming?'

'Oh yes? positively; don't be afraid of his gaining ground on the little Violet in your absence.'

'Well, then, my dear von Konigstein, I will come.'

‘Well, that’s yourself again. It made me quite unhappy, to see you look so sour and melancholy ; one would have thought that I was some troublesome bore, Prince Salvinski at least, by the way you spoke to me. Well, mind you come—it’s a promise :—good. I must go and say just one word to the lovely little Saxon, and by the bye, Grey, one word before I’m off. List to a friend, you’re on the wrong scent about Miss Fane ; St. George, I think, has no chance there, and now no wish to succeed. The game’s your own, if you like ; trust my word, she’s an angel. The good powers prosper you !’ so saying, the Baron ran off.

Mr. St. George had danced with Miss Fane the only quadrille in which Lady Madeleine allowed her to join. He was now waltzing with Aurelia Fitzloom, and was at the head of a band of adventurous votaries of Terpsichore ; who, wearied with the common-place convenience of a saloon, had ventured to invoke the Muse on the lawn.

‘A most interesting sight, Lady Madeleine Trevor !’ said Mr. Fitzloom, as he offered his arm to her Ladyship, and advised their instant presence as patrons of the ‘*Fête du Village*,’ for such Baron von Konigstein had most happily termed it. ‘A delightful man that Baron von Konigstein, and says such delightful things ! *Fête du Village* ! how very good !’

‘That is Miss Fitzloom then, whom my brother is waltzing with ?’ asked Lady Madeleine in her usual kind tone.

‘Not exactly, my Lady Madeleine,’ said Mr. Fitzloom, ‘not exactly *Miss* Fitzloom, rather Miss Aurelia Fitzloom, my third daughter ; *our third eldest*, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says ; for really it is necessary to distinguish, with such a family as ours, you know, my Lady Madeleine !’

‘But don’t you think, Mr. Fitzloom, that your *third* daughter is a sufficiently definite description ?’ asked her Ladyship.

‘Why you know, my Lady Madeleine, there *might* be

a mistake. There's the third youngest ! and if one say the *third* merely, why, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says, the question is, *which is which ?*'

'That view of the case, I confess, did not strike me before.'

'Mr. Grey,' said Miss Fane, for she was now leaning upon his arm : 'have you any objection to walk up and down the terrace ? the evening is deliciously soft, but even with the protection of a Cachemere I scarcely dare venture to stand still. Lady Madeleine seems very much engaged at present. What amusing people these Fitzlooms are !'

'Mrs. Fitzloom ; I've not heard her voice yet.'

'No ; Mrs. Fitzloom does not talk. St. George says she makes it a rule never to speak in the presence of a stranger. She deals plenteously, however, at home in domestic apothegms. If you could but hear him imitating them all !—Whenever she does speak, she finishes all her sentences by confessing that she is conscious of her own deficiencies ; but that she has taken care to give her daughters the very best education. They are what St. George calls fine dashing girls, and I'm very glad he's made friends with them ; for, after all, he must find it rather dull here. By the bye, Mr. Grey, I'm afraid that you can't find this evening very amusing ; the absence of a favourite pursuit always makes a sensible void ; and these walls must remind you of more piquant pleasures than waltzing with fine London ladies, or promenading up a dull terrace with an invalid.'

'Miss Fane, I fear that you are a bitter satirist ; but I assure you that you are quite misinformed as to the mode in which I generally pass my evenings.'

'I hope I am, Mr. Grey !' said Miss Fane, in rather a serious tone ; 'I wish I could also be mistaken in my suspicions of the mode in which St. George spends his time. He's sadly changed. For the first month that we were here, he seemed to prefer nothing in the world to our society, and now—— I was nearly saying that we had

not seen him for one single evening these three weeks. I cannot understand what you find at this house of such absorbing interest. Although I know you think I am much mistaken in my suspicions, still I feel very anxious, very anxious indeed. I spoke to St. George to-day, but he scarcely answered me ; or said that, which it was a pleasure for me to forget.'

'Mr. St. George should feel highly gratified in having excited such an interest in the—mind of Miss Fane.'

'He cannot—he should not feel more gratified than all who are my friends ; for all who are such, I must ever experience the liveliest interest.'

'How happy must those be who feel that they have a right to count Miss Fane among their friends !'

'I have the pleasure then, I assure you, of making many happy, and among them Mr. Grey.'

Vivian was surprised that he did not utter some usual complimentary answer ; but he knew not why, the words stuck in his throat ; and instead of speaking, he was thinking of what had been spoken. In a second he had mentally repeated Miss Fane's answer a thousand times—it rang in his ears—it thrilled his blood. In another moment he was ashamed of being such a fool.

'How brilliant are these gardens !' said Vivian, looking at the sky.

'Very brilliant !' said Violet Fane, looking on the ground. Conversation seemed nearly extinct, and yet neither offered to turn back.

'Good heavens ! you are ill, Miss Fane,' suddenly exclaimed Vivian, when, on accidentally turning to his companion, he found she was in tears. 'Shall we go back, or will you wait here ?—Can I fetch anything ?—I fear you are very ill !'

'No, no ! not very ill, but very foolish ; let us walk on, Mr. Grey, walk on—walk on.' Here Vivian thought that she was going into hysterics ; but heaving a deep sigh, she seemed suddenly to recover.

'I am ashamed, Mr. Grey, of myself—this trouble, this

foolishness—what can you think? but I am so agitated, so nervous—I hope you'll forget—I hope—'

'Perhaps the air has suddenly affected you—had we not better go in?—Pray, pray compose yourself. I trust that nothing I have said—that nothing has happened—that no one has dared to say, or do, anything to offend you—to annoy you? Speak, pray speak, Miss Fane—dear Miss Fane, the—the—'—the words died on Vivian's lips, yet a power he could not withstand urged him to speak—'the—the—the Baron?'

'Oh!' almost shrieked Miss Fane—'No, no, stop one second—let me compose myself—an effort, and I must be well—nothing, nothing has happened, and no one has done or said anything; but it is of something that should be said—of something that should be done, that I was thinking, and it overcame me.'

'Miss Fane,' said Vivian, 'if there be any service which I can do—any advice which I can give—any possible way that I can exert myself for you, oh, speak!—oh, speak!—speak with the most perfect confidence—with firmness—with courage; do not fear that your motives will be misconceived—that your purpose will be misinterpreted—that your confidence will be misunderstood. You are addressing one who would lay down his life for you—who is willing to perform all your commands, and forget them when performed. I beseech you to trust me—believe me that you shall not repent.'

She answered not, but holding down her head, covered her face with her small white hand; her lovely face which was crimsoned with her flashing blood. They were now at the end of the terrace—to return was impossible. If they remained stationary, they must be perceived and joined. What was to be done? Oh moment of agony!—He led her down a solitary walk still further from the house. As they proceeded in silence, the bursts of the music, and the loud laughter of the joyous guests became fainter and fainter, till at last the sounds died away into echo—and echo into silence.

A thousand thoughts dashed through Vivian's mind in rapid succession ; but a painful one—a most painful one to him, to any man,—always remained the last. His companion would not speak ; yet to allow her to return home without freeing her mind of the burthen, the fearful burthen, which evidently overwhelmed it, was impossible. At length he broke a silence which seemed to have lasted an age.

‘Miss Fane, do not believe for an instant that I am taking advantage of an agitating moment, to extract from you a confidence which you may repent. I feel assured that I am right in supposing that you have contemplated in a calmer moment the possibility of my being of service to you ; that, in short, there is something in which you require my assistance, my co-operation—an assistance, Miss Fane—a co-operation, which, if it produce any benefit to you, will make me at length feel that I have not lived in vain. I cannot, I cannot allow any feelings of false delicacy to prevent me from assisting you in giving utterance to thoughts, which you have owned it is absolutely necessary should be expressed. Remember, remember that you have allowed me to believe that we are friends : do not, do not prove by your silence, that we are friends only in name.’

‘I am overwhelmed—I cannot speak—my face burns with shame ; I have miscalculated my strength of mind—perhaps my physical strength ; what, what must you think of me?’ She spoke in a low and smothered voice.

‘Think of you, Miss Fane ! everything which the most devoted respect dare think of an object which it reverences.—Oh ! understand me ; do not believe that I am one who would presume an instant on my situation—because I have accidentally witnessed a young and lovely woman betrayed into a display of feeling which the artificial forms of cold society cannot contemplate, and dare to ridicule. You are speaking to one who also has felt ; who, though a man, has wept ; who can comprehend

sorrow ; who can understand the most secret sensations of an agitated spirit. Dare to trust me. Be convinced that hereafter, neither by word, nor look, hint, nor sign on my part, shall you feel, save by your own wish, that you have appeared to Vivian Grey in any other light than as the accomplished Miss Fane, the idol of an admiring circle.'

'You are too, too good—generous, generous man, I dare trust anything to you that I dare trust to human being ; but——' here her voice died away.

'Miss Fane, it is a painful, a most painful thing for me to attempt to guess your thoughts, or anticipate your confidence ; but, if—if—if it be of Mr. St. George that you are thinking, have no fear respecting him—have no fear about his present situation—trust to me that there shall be no anxiety for his future one. I will be his unknown guardian, his unseen friend ; the promoter of your wishes, the protector of your——'

'No, no, Mr. Grey,' said Miss Fane, with firmness, and looking quickly up, as if her mind were relieved by discovering that all this time Vivian had never imagined she was thinking of him. 'No, no, Mr. Grey, you are mistaken ; it is not of Mr. St. George, of Mr. St. George only, that I am thinking. I—I—I am much better now ; I shall be able in an instant to speak—be able, I trust, to forget how foolish—how very foolish I have been.'

'Let us walk on,' continued Miss Fane ; 'let us walk on ; we can easily account for our absence if it be remarked ; and it is better, much better, that it should be all over : I feel quite well, quite, quite well ; and shall be able to speak quite firmly now.'

'Do not hurry ; compose yourself, I beseech you ; there is no fear of our absence being remarked, Lady Madeleine is so surrounded.'

'After what has passed, Mr. Grey, it seems ridiculous in me to apologise, as I had intended, for speaking to you on a graver subject than what has generally formed the point of conversation between us. I feared that you

might misunderstand the motives which have dictated my conduct: I have attempted not to appear agitated, and I have been overcome. I trust that you will not be offended if I recur to the subject of the New House. Do not believe that I ever would have allowed my fears, my girlish fears, so to have overcome my discretion,—so to have overcome, indeed, all propriety of conduct on my part,—as to have induced me to have sought an interview with you, to moralise to you about your mode of life. No, no, it is not of this that I wish to speak, or rather that I will speak. I will hope, I will pray, that St. George and yourself have never found in that which you have followed as an amusement, the source, the origin, the cause of a single unhappy, or even anxious moment; Mr. Grey, I will believe all this.’

‘Dearest Miss Fane, believe it, believe it with confidence. Of St. George, I can with sincerity aver, that it is my firm opinion, that far from being involved, his fortune is not in the slightest degree injured. Believe me, I will not attempt to quiet you now, as I would have done at any other time, by telling you that you magnify your fears, and allow your feelings to exaggerate the danger which exists. There has been danger—there is danger;—play, very high, tremendously high play, has been, and is pursued at this New House, but Mr. St. George has never been a loser; and, believe me, if the exertions of man can avail, never shall—never shall at least unfairly. Of the other individual, Miss Fane, whom you have honoured by the interest which you have kindly professed in his welfare, allow me to say one word: no one can detest, more thoroughly detest, any practice which exists in this world—Miss Fane cannot detest impurity with a more perfect antipathy—than he does the gaming-table. You know the miserable, but miraculous fortune, which made my first night here notorious. My luck has stuck by me like a curse; and from the customs of society, from which it is impossible to emancipate ourselves, a man in my situation cannot cease to play without incurring a

slur upon his reputation. You will smile at a reputation which depends almost upon the commission of a vile folly ; we have not time to argue these subtile points at present. It is sufficient for me to say, that I cannot resist this custom without being prepared to chastise the insolence of those who will consequently insult me. In that case, my reputation, already tarnished by the non-commission of a folly, will, according to the customs of society, be utterly ruined, unless it be re-burnished by the commission of a crime. I have no pistol now, Miss Fane, for my fellow-creatures,—my right hand is still red with the blood of my friend. To play therefore, with me has been a duty : I still win—the duty continues—but, believe me, that I shall never lose ; and I look forward with eagerness to the moment when this thralldom shall cease.’

‘Oh ! you’ve made me so happy ! I feel so persuaded that you have not deceived me—the tones of your voice, your manner, your expression, convince me that you have been sincere, and that I am happy—happy at least for the present.’

‘For ever I trust, Miss Fane.’

‘Let me, let me now prevent all future misery—let me speak about that which has long dwelt on my mind like a nightmare—about that which I did fear it was almost too late to speak. Not of your pursuit, Mr. Grey—not even of that fatal and horrid pursuit, do I now think, but of your companion in this amusement, in all amusements—it is he, he that I dread, that I look upon with horror, even to him, I cannot say, with hatred !’

‘The Baron !’ said Vivian, calmly.

‘I cannot name him—Oh ! dread him, fear him, avoid him ! it is he that I mean, he of whom I thought that you were the victim. Possessing, as he does, all the qualifications which apparently would render a man’s society desirable—you must have been surprised, you must have wondered at our conduct towards him. Oh ! Mr. Grey, when Lady Madeleine turned from him with

coolness, when she answered him in tones which to you might have appeared harsh; she behaved to him, in comparison to what is his due, and what we sometimes feel to be our duty, with affection—actually with affection and regard. Oh! no human being can know what horror is, until he looks upon a fellow-creature with the eyes that I look upon that man.’ She leant upon Vivian’s arm with her whole weight, and even then he thought she must have sunk—neither spoke. How solemn is the silence of sorrow!

‘I am overcome,’ continued Miss Fane; ‘the remembrance of what he has done overwhelms me—I cannot speak it—the recollection is death—yet you must know it. That you might know it, I have before attempted. I wished to have spared myself the torture which I now endure. It would perhaps have been more consistent with my dignity, it would perhaps have been more correct, to have been silent—but I felt it—I felt it a duty which I owed to a fellow-creature—and your conduct, your kind, your generous conduct to me this evening, repays me even for all this pain. You must know it, you must know it. I will write—ay! that will do. I will write—I cannot speak now, it is impossible, but beware of him; you, you are so young!’

‘I have no words now to thank you, Miss Fane, for this. Had I been the victim of von Konigstein, I should have been repaid for all my misery by feeling that you regretted its infliction; but I trust that I am in no danger:—though young, though very young, I fear that I am one who must not count my time by calendars. I may truly say of myself, ‘an aged interpreter, though young in days.’ Would that I could be deceived! Fear not for your cousin. Trust to one whom you have made think better of this world, and of his fellow-creatures.’

The sound of approaching footsteps, and the light laugh of pleasure, told of some who were wandering like themselves.

‘We had better return,’ said Miss Fane; ‘I fear that Lady Madeleine will observe that I look unwell.—Some one approaches!—No!—they pass only the top of the walk.’ It was St. George and Aurelia Fitzloom.

Quick flew the brilliant hours; and soon the dance was over, and the music mute. Lady Madeleine Trevor and Miss Fane retired long before the party broke up, and Vivian accompanied them and Mr. Sherborne. He did not return to the gay saloon, but found himself walking in the same gardens, by the side of the same river, lighted by the same moon, and listening to the same nightingale, as on the preceding night. How much had happened to him in the course of one day’s circle! How changed were his feelings; not merely from yesternight, but even from a few hours since. She loved him!—yes, she must love him. All was forgotten: he felt as if his dilated soul despised its frail and impure tenement. Now, indeed, he was in love. The interview with Violet Fane came, after his conversation with Lady Madeleine, like incense after music. Think not that he was fickle, inconstant, capricious; his love for the first had insensibly grown out of his admiration of the other; as a man gazing on a magnificent sunset, remains, when the heavens have ceased to glow, with his eyes fixed on the Evening star.

It was late when he retired. As he opened his door he was surprised to find lights in his chamber. The figure of a man appeared seated at the table. It moved—it was Essper George.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE reader will remember that Vivian had agreed to dine, on the day after the fête, with the Baron, in his private apartments. This was an arrangement which, in fact, the custom of the house did not

permit ; but the irregularities of great men who are attended by Chasseurs, are occasionally winked at by a supple maître d'hôtel. Vivian had various reasons for not regretting his acceptance of the invitation ; and he never shook hands with the Chevalier de Boëffleurs, apparently, with greater cordiality, than on the day on which he met him at dinner at the Baron von Konigstein's. Mr. St. George had not arrived.

'Past five !' said his Excellency ; 'riding out, I suppose, with the Fitzlooms. Aurelia is certainly a fine girl ; but I should think that Lady Madeleine would hardly approve the connection. The St. Georges have blood in their veins ; and would, I suppose, as soon think of marrying a Fitzloom, as we Germans should of marrying a woman without a *von* before her name. We're quite alone, Grey, only the Chevalier and St. George. I had an idea of asking Salvinski ; but he is such a regular steam-engine, and began such a long story last night about his interview with the King of Ashantee, that the bare possibility of his taking it into his head to finish it to-day frightened me. You were away early from the Archduke's last night. The business went off well.'

'Very well, indeed !' said the Chevalier de Boëffleurs ; completing by this speech the first dozen of words which he had uttered since his stay at Ems.

'I think that last night Lady Madeleine Trevor looked perfectly magnificent ; and a certain lady too, Grey, eh ? —Here's St. George. My dear fellow, how are you ? Has the fair Aurelia recovered from the last night's fatigues ? All in that quarter goes on quite well, I hope. Now, Ernstorff—dinner, as soon as possible.'

The Baron made up to-day, certainly, for the silence of his friend, the Chevalier. He outdid himself. Story after story, adventure after adventure, followed each other with the most exciting haste. In fact, the Baron never ceased talking the whole dinner, except when he refreshed himself with wine, which he drank copiously. A nice

observer would perhaps have considered the Baron's high spirits artificial, and his conversation an effort. Yet his Excellency's temper, though lively, was generally equable; and his ideas, which always appeared to occur easily, were usually thrown out in fluent phraseology. The dinner was long, and a great deal of wine was drunk; more, much more, than most of the parties present for a long time had been accustomed to. About eight o'clock the Chevalier proposed going to the Redoute, but the Baron objected.

'Let's have an evening altogether: surely we've had enough of the Redoute. In my opinion one of the advantages of the fête is, that there is no New House to-night. Conversation is a novelty. On a moderate calculation, I must have told you to-day at least two thousand original anecdotes. I've done my duty. It's the Chevalier's turn now. Come, de Boëffleurs—a choice one!'

'I remember a story Prince Salvinski once told me.'

'No, no—that's too bad—none of that Polish bear's romances; if we have his stories, we may as well have his company.'

'But it's a very curious story,' continued the Chevalier, with a little animation.

'Oh! so is every story, according to the storier.'

'I think, von Konigstein, you imagine no one can tell a story but yourself,' said de Boëffleurs, actually indignant. Vivian had never heard him speak so much before, and really began to believe that he was not quite an automaton.

'Let's have it!' said St. George.

'It's a story told of a Polish nobleman—a Count somebody:—I never can remember their crack-jaw names. Well! the point is this,' said the silent little Chevalier, who apparently, already repented of the boldness of his offer, and, misdoubting his powers, wished to begin with the end of his tale, 'the point is this—he was playing one day at *écarté* with the Governor of Wilna—the stake was

trifling ; but he had a bet, you see, with the Governor of a thousand roubles ; a bet with the Governor's secretary—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty, you see ; then, he went on the turn-up with the Commandant's wife ; and took the pips on the trumps with the Archbishop of Warsaw. To understand the point of the story, you see, you must have a distinct conception how the game stood. You see, St. George, there was the bet with the Governor, one thousand roubles ; the Governor's secretary,—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty ; the turn-up with the Commandant's lady, and the pips with the Archbishop of Warsaw. Proposed three times—one for the king—the Governor drew ace—the Governor was already three and the ten. When the Governor scored king, the Archbishop gave the odds—drew knave queen one hand—the Count offered to propose fourth time—Governor refused. King to six, ace fell to knave—queen cleared on—Governor lost, besides bets with the whole *état-major* ; the Secretary gave his bill ; the Commandant's lady pawned her jewels ; and the Archbishop was done on the pips !

‘By Jove, what a Salvinski !’

‘How many trumps had the Governor ?’ asked St. George.

‘Three,’ said the Chevalier.

‘Then it's impossible : I don't believe the story ; it couldn't be.’

‘I beg your pardon,’ said the Chevalier ; ‘you see the Governor had——’

‘For heaven's sake, don't let us have it all over again !’ said the Baron. ‘Well ! if this be your model for an after-dinner anecdote, which ought to be as piquant as an anchovy toast, I'll never complain of your silence in future. I'm sure you never learnt this in the *Palais Royal* !’

‘The story's a true story,’ said the Chevalier ; ‘have you got a pack of cards, von Königstein ? I'll show it you.’

'There is not such a thing in the room,' said the Baron.

'Well, I never heard of a room without a pack of cards before,' said the Chevalier; 'I'll send for one to my own apartments.'

'Oh! by-the-bye, perhaps Ernstorff has got a pack. Here Ernstorff, have you got a pack of cards? That's good; bring it immediately.'

The cards were brought, and the Chevalier began to fight his battle over again; but could not satisfy Mr. St. George. 'You see there was the bet with the Governor, and the pips, as I said before with the Archbishop of Warsaw.'

'My dear de Boëffleurs, let's no more of this. If you like to have a game of *écarté* with St. George, well and good; but as for quarrelling the whole evening about some blundering lie of Salvinski's, it really is too much. You two can play, and I can talk to Don Vivian, who, by-the-bye, is rather of the rueful countenance to-night. Why, my dear fellow, I haven't heard your voice this evening:—frightened by the fate of the Archbishop of Warsaw, I suppose?'

'*Ecarté* is so devilish dull,' said St. George; 'and it's such a trouble to deal.'

'I'll deal for both, if you like,' said de Boëffleurs; 'I'm used to dealing.'

'Oh no—I won't play *écarté*; let's have something in which we can all join.'

'Rouge-et-Noir,' suggested the Chevalier, in a careless tone, as if he had no taste for the amusement.

'There isn't enough—is there?' asked St. George.

'Oh! two are enough, you know—one deals,—much more four.'

'Well, I don't care—Rouge-et-Noir then—let's have Rouge-et-Noir:—von Konigstein, what say you to Rouge-et-Noir? De Boëffleurs says we can play it here very well. Come, Grey!'

'Oh! Rouge-et-Noir, Rouge-et-Noir,' said the Baron;

‘haven’t you both had Rouge-et-Noir enough? Ain’t I to be allowed one holiday? Well! anything to please you; so Rouge-et-Noir, if it must be so.’

‘If all wish it, I have no objection,’ said Vivian.

‘Well then, let’s sit down; Ernstorff has, I daresay, another pack of cards, and St. George will be dealer, I know he likes that ceremony.’

‘No, no, I appoint the Chevalier.’

‘Very well,’ said de Boëffleurs; ‘the plan will be for two to bank against the table; the table to play on the same colour by joint agreement. You can join me, von Königstein, and pay or receive with me, from Mr. St. George and Grey.’

‘I’ll bank with you, if you like, Chevalier,’ said Vivian, very quietly.

‘Oh! certainly, Mr. Grey—certainly, Grey—most certainly; that is if you like:—but perhaps the Baron is more used to banking; you perhaps don’t understand it.’

‘Perfectly; it appears to me to be very simple.’

‘No—don’t you bank, Grey,’ said St. George; ‘I want you to play with me against the Chevalier and the Baron—I like your luck.’

‘Luck is very capricious, remember, Mr. St. George.’

‘Oh no! I like your luck; I like your luck—don’t bank.’

‘Be it so.’

Playing commenced: an hour elapsed, and the situation of none of the parties was materially different to what it had been when they began the game. Vivian proposed leaving off; but Mr. St. George avowed that he felt very fortunate, and that he had a presentiment that he should win. Another hour elapsed, and he had lost considerably.—Eleven o’clock.—Vivian’s luck had also deserted him. Mr. St. George was losing desperately—Midnight—Vivian had lost back half his gains on the season. St. George still more desperate; all his coolness had deserted him. He had persisted obstinately against a run on the

red ; then floundered, and got entangled in a see-saw, which alone cost him a thousand.

Ernstorff now brought in refreshments ; and for a moment they ceased playing. The Baron opened a bottle of champagne ; and St. George and the Chevalier were stretching their legs and composing their minds in very different ways—the first in walking rapidly up and down the room, and the other by lying very quietly at his full length on the sofa. Vivian was employed in building houses with the cards.

‘Grey,’ said the Chevalier de Boëffleurs ; ‘I can’t imagine why you don’t for a moment try to forget the cards ; that’s the only way to win. Never sit musing over the table.’

But Grey was not to be persuaded to give up building his pagoda ; which, now many stories high, like a more celebrated, but scarcely more substantial structure, fell with a crash. Vivian collected the scattered cards into two divisions.

‘Now !’ said the Baron, seating himself ; ‘for St. George’s revenge.’

The Chevalier, and the greatest sufferer took their places.

‘Is Ernstorff coming in again, Baron ?’ asked Vivian, very calmly.

‘No ! I think not.’

‘Let us be sure : it’s disagreeable to be disturbed at this time of night, and so interested as we are.’

‘Lock the door, then,’ said St. George.

‘A very good plan,’ said Vivian ; and he locked it accordingly.

‘Now gentlemen,’ said Vivian, rising from the table, and putting both packs of cards into his pocket—‘Now gentlemen, I have another game to play.’ The Chevalier started on his chair—the Baron turned quite pale, but both were silent. ‘Mr. St. George,’ continued Vivian ; ‘I think that you are in debt to the Chevalier de Boëffleurs, upwards of two thousand pounds ; and to Baron von

Konigstein, something more than half that sum. I have to inform you, Sir, that it is utterly unnecessary for you to satisfy the claims of either of these gentlemen, which are founded neither in law, nor in honour.'

'Mr. Grey, what am I to understand?' asked the quiet Chevalier de Boëffleurs, with the air of a wolf, and the voice of a lion.

'Understand, Sir!' answered Vivian, sternly; 'that I am not one who will be bullied by a black-leg.'

'Grey! good God! Grey! what do you mean?' asked the Baron.

'That which it is my duty, not my pleasure, to explain, Baron von Konigstein.'

'If you mean to insinuate,' burst forth the Chevalier, 'if you mean to insinuate——'

'I mean to insinuate nothing, Sir; I leave insinuations and innuendoes to shuffling *chevaliers d'industrie*. I mean to prove everything.'

Mr. St. George did not speak, but seemed as utterly astounded and overwhelmed as Baron von Konigstein himself; who, with his arm leaning on the table, his hands clasped, and the forefinger of his right hand playing convulsively on his left, was pale as death, and did not even breathe.

'Gentlemen,' said Vivian, 'I shall not detain you long, though I have much to say that is to the purpose. I am perfectly cool, and believe me, perfectly resolute. Let me recommend to you all the same temperament—it may be better for you. Rest assured, that if you flatter yourselves that I am one to be pigeoned, and then bullied, you are mistaken. In one word, I am aware of everything that has been arranged for the reception of Mr. St. George and myself this evening. Your marked cards are in my pocket, and can only be obtained by you with my life. Here are two of us against two; we are equally matched in number, and I, gentlemen, am armed. If I were not, you would not dare to go to extremities. Is it not, then, the wisest course to be temperate, my friends?'

‘This is some vile conspiracy of your own, fellow,’ said de Boëffleurs; ‘marked cards indeed! a pretty tale, forsooth! The Ministers of a first-rate power playing with marked cards! The story will gain credit, and on the faith of whom? An adventurer that no one knows; who, having failed this night in his usual tricks, and lost money which he cannot pay, takes advantage of the marked cards, which he has not succeeded in introducing, and pretends, forsooth, that they are those which he has stolen from our table; our own cards being, previously to his accusation, concealed in a secret pocket.’

The impudence of the fellow staggered even Vivian. As for Mr. St. George, he stared like a wild man. Before Vivian could answer him, the Baron had broke silence. It was with the greatest effort that he seemed to dig his words out of his breast.

‘No—no—this is too much! it is all over! I am lost; but I will not add crime to crime. Your courage and your fortune have saved you, Mr. Grey, and your friend, from the designs of villains. And you! wretch,’ said he, turning to de Boëffleurs, ‘sleep now in peace—at length you have undone me.’ He leant on the table, and buried his face in his hands.

‘Chicken-hearted fool!’ said the Chevalier; ‘is this the end of all your promises, and all your pledges? But remember, Sir! remember. I have no taste for scenes. Good-night, gentlemen. Baron, I expect to hear from *you*.’

‘Stop, Sir!’ said Vivian; ‘no one leaves this room without my permission.’

‘I am at your service, Sir, when you please,’ said the Chevalier, throwing down his card.

‘It is not my intention to detain you long, Sir; far from it; I have every inclination to assist you in your last exit from this room, had I time, it should not be by the door; as it is, go! in the devil’s name.’ So saying, he hurled the adventurous Frenchman half down the corridor.

‘Baron von Konigstein,’ said Vivian, turning to the Baron ; ‘you have proved yourself, by your conduct this evening, to be a better man than I imagined you. I confess that I thought you had been too much accustomed to such scenes, to be sensible of the horror of detection.’

‘Never !’ said the Baron, with emphasis, with energy. The firm voice and manner in which he pronounced this single word, wonderfully contrasted with his delivery when he had last spoke, but his voice immediately died away.

‘’Tis all over ! ’tis all over ! I have no wish to excite your pity, gentlemen, or to gain your silence, by practising upon your feelings. Be silent ; I am not the less ruined ; not the less disgraced ; not the less utterly undone. Be silent ; my honour, all the same, in four-and-twenty hours, has gone for ever : I have no motive then to deceive you. You must believe what I speak ; even what *I* speak, the most degraded, the vilest of men. I say again, *never*, never, never, never, never was my honour before sullied, though guilty of a thousand follies. You see before you, gentlemen, the unhappy victim of circumstances ; of circumstances which he has in vain struggled to control ; to which he has at length fallen a victim. I am not pretending, for a moment, that my crimes are to be accounted for by an inexorable fate, and not to be expiated by my everlasting misery : No, no, ! I have been too weak to be virtuous : but I have been tried ; tried most bitterly. I am the most unfortunate of men ; I was not born to be a villain. Four years have passed since I was banished from the country in which I was honoured ; my prospects in life blasted ; my peace of mind destroyed ; and all because a crime was committed, of any participation in which I am as innocent as yourselves. Driven in despair to wander, I tried, in the wild dissipation of Naples, to forget my existence, and my misery. I found my Fate in the person of this vile Frenchman, who never since has quitted me. Even after two years of madness in that fatal place, my natural

disposition rallied ; I struggled to save myself ; I quitted it. I was already involved to de Bœffleurs ; I became still more so, in gaining from him the means of satisfying all claims against me. Alas ! I found I had sold myself to a scoundrel ; a most unadulterated villain ; a devil, a very devil ; with a heart like an adder's. Incapable of a stray generous sensation, he has looked upon mankind during his whole life, with the eyes of a bully of a gaming-house. I still struggled to free myself from this man ; and I indemnified him for his advances, by procuring him a place in the mission to which, with the greatest difficulty and perseverance, I had at length procured my appointment. In public life I yet hoped to forget my private misery. At Frankfort I felt, that though not happy, I might be calm. I determined never again even to run the risk of enduring the slavery of debt. I forswore, with the most solemn oaths, the gaming-table ; and had it not been for the perpetual sight of de Bœffleurs, I might, perhaps, have felt at ease ; though the remembrance of my blighted prospects, the eternal feeling that I experienced of being born for nobler ends, was quite sufficient perpetually to embitter my existence. The second year of my Frankfort appointment, I was tempted to this unhappy place. The unexpected sight of faces which I had known in England, though they called up the most painful associations, strengthened me, nevertheless, in my resolution to be virtuous. My unexpected, my extraordinary fortune at the Redoute, the first night, made me forget all my resolves, and has led to all this misery. I make my sad tale brief. I got involved at the New House : de Bœffleurs once more assisted me ; though his terms were most severe. Yet, yet again, I was mad enough, vile enough, to risk what I did not possess. I lost to Prince Salvinski and a Russian gentleman, a considerable sum on the night before the *fête*. It is often the custom at the New House, as you know, among men who are acquainted, to pay and receive all losses which are consider-

able on the next night of meeting. The *fête* gave me breathing time: It was not necessary to redeem my pledge till the fourth night. I rushed to de Boëffleurs; he refused to assist me; alleging his own losses, and his previous advance. What was to be done? No possibility of making any arrangement with Salvinski. Had he won of me as others have done, an arrangement, though painful, would perhaps have been possible; but, by a singular fate, whenever I have chanced to be successful, it is of this man that I have won. De Boëffleurs then was the only chance. He was inexorable. I prayed to him; I promised him everything; I offered him any terms; I besought him on my knees;—in vain! in vain! At length, when he had worked me up to the point of last despair, he whispered *hope*. I listened,—let me be quick!—why finish—why finish; you know I fell!’ The Baron again covered his face, and appeared perfectly overwhelmed.

‘By God! it’s too horrible,’ said St. George. ‘Grey, let’s do something for him?’

‘My dear St. George,’ said Vivian, ‘be calm—you are taken by surprise: I was prepared for all this. Believe me, it is better for you to leave us. If, on consideration, we think that anything,—any real benefit can be done to this unhappy gentleman, I am sure that we shall not be backward. But I cannot permit your generous feelings to be taken advantage of, by a gamester—a madman, who, if freed from his present difficulties this moment, will commit the same follies, and the same crimes to-morrow. I recommend you to retire, and meet me in the morning: breakfast with me at eight, we can then arrange everything.’

Vivian’s conduct had been so decisive, and evidently so well matured, that St. George felt, that in the present case, it was for him only to obey; and squeezing Vivian’s hand very warmly, he retired, with wonder still expressed on his countenance; for he had not yet, in the slightest degree, recovered from the first surprise.

‘Baron von Konigstein,’ said Vivian to the unhappy man, ‘we are alone. Mr. St. George has left the room : you are freed from the painful presence of the cousin of Captain Fane.’

‘You know all then !’ exclaimed the Baron, quickly looking up ; ‘or you have read my secret thoughts. How wonderful ! at that very moment I was thinking of my friend. Would I had died with him ! You know all then ; and now—now you must believe me guilty. Yet, Mr. Grey, at this moment—at this moment of deepest affliction, of annihilating sorrow ; when I can gain nothing by deceit ; when, whatever may have been, my loose expressions in a lighter hour, I am thinking of another world : I swear—and if I swear falsely, may I fall down a livid corpse at your feet,—I swear that I was guiltless of the crime for which I suffered, guiltless as yourself. Dare I ask if you believe me ?’

He awaited Vivian’s answer, with the most eager anxiety ; his mouth was open ; his eyes half started from their sockets : had his life or reputation depended upon the answer, he could not have gasped with more convulsive agony.

‘I do believe you.’

‘Then God be thanked ! I owe you the greatest favour that I yet owe human being. What may be my fate—my end—I know not. Probably a few hours, and all will be over. Yet, before we part, Sir, it would be a relief ; you would be doing a kind and Christian service to a dying man, to bear a message from me to one with whom you are acquainted—to one whom I cannot now name.’

‘Lady Madeleine Trevor, Sir ?’

‘Again you have read my thoughts ! Lady Madeleine !—is it she who told you of my early history ? Answer me, I beseech you ?’

‘I cannot answer. All that I know, is known to many.’

‘I must speak ! if you have time, Mr. Grey, if you can listen for half an hour to a miserable being, it would

be a consolation to me. I should die with ease, if I thought that Lady Madeleine could believe me innocent of that first great offence.'

'Your Excellency may address anything to me, if it be your wish, even at this hour of the night. It may be better ; after what has passed, we neither of us can sleep, and this business must be arranged at once.'

'My object, Mr. Grey, is, that Lady Madeleine should receive from me at this moment, at a time when I can have no interest to deceive, an account of the particulars of her cousin's, and my friend's death. I sent it written after the horrid event, but she was ill ; and Trevor, who was very bitter against me, returned the letters unopened. For four years, I have never travelled without these rejected letters ; this year I have them not. But you could convey to Lady Madeleine my story as now given to you ; to you at this horrid moment. For God's sake do, Sir, I beseech you !'

'Speak on, speak on !'

'I must say one word of my connection with the family, to enable you fully to understand the horrid event, of which, if, as I believe, you only know what all know, you can form but a most imperfect conception. When I was Minister at the Court of London, I became acquainted—became, indeed, intimate with Mr. Trevor, then in office, the husband of Lady Madeleine. Her Ladyship was just married. Trevor was an able and honourable man, but advanced in years ; had he been younger he was not the man to have riveted the affections of any woman. As it was, his marriage was a mere political match. I will not stop now to moralise on these unhappy connections, in which the affections on neither side are consulted ; but assuredly, in the present instance, Trevor had been more cautious in securing the boroughs of the Earl, than the heart of the Earl's daughter. I saw all this, Mr. Grey ; I, still young, and with such blood flowing in my veins, that the youth of common men was actually old age in comparison with my sensations : I saw all this in

the possession of all those accomplishments and qualities, which, according to the world, work such marvels with women. I saw all this, Mr. Grey: I, a libertine by principle. Of Lady Madeleine's beauty, of her soul, I need not speak. You have the happiness of being the friend of that matchless creature. Of myself, at that time, I may say, that though depraved, I was not heartless; and that there were moments when I panted to be excellent. Lady Madeleine and myself became friends; she found in me a companion, who not only respected her talents, and delighted in her conversation; but one who in return was capable of instructing, and was overjoyed to amuse her. I loved her; but when I loved her, Sir, I ceased to be a libertine. At first I thought that nothing in the world could have tempted me to have allowed her for an instant to imagine that I dared to look upon her in any other light than as a friend; but the negligence, the coldness of Trevor, the overpowering mastery of my own passions, drove me one day past the line, and I wrote that which I dared not utter. But understand me, Sir; it was no common, no usual letter that I wrote. It never entered into my mind for an instant to insult such a woman with the commonplace sophistry—the disguised sentiments of a ribald. No! no! I loved Lady Madeleine with all my spirit's strength. I would have sacrificed all my views in life—my ambition—my family—my fortune—my country, to have gained her; and I told her this in terms of the most respectful adoration. I worshipped the divinity, even while I attempted to profane the altar. Sir, when I had sent this letter, I was in despair. Conviction of the perfect insanity of my conduct flashed across my mind. I expected never to see her again. There came an answer; I opened it with the greatest agitation; to my surprise—an appointment. Why, why trouble you with a detail of my feelings at this moment—my mad hope—my dark despair. The moment for the interview arrived. I was received neither with affection nor anger. In sorrow, in sorrow she spoke. I listened in despair. I

was more madly in love with her than ever. That very love made me give her such evidences of a contrite spirit, that I was pardoned. I rose with a resolution to be virtuous—with a determination to be her friend ; then, then I made the fatal promise which you know of—to be doubly the friend of a man, whose friend I already was ; it was then that I pledged myself to Lady Madeleine to be the guardian spirit of her cousin.'—Here the Baron was so overpowered by his emotions that he leant back in his chair and ceased to speak. In a few minutes he resumed.

'Mr. Grey, I did my duty ; by all that's sacred I did my duty ! night, and day, I was with young Fane. A thousand times he was on the brink of ruin—a thousand times I saved him. One day—one never-to-be-forgotten day,—one most dark and damnable day, I called on him, and found him on the point of joining a coterie of the most desperate character. I remonstrated with him ;—I entreated ;—I supplicated him not to go—in vain. At last he agreed to forego his engagement, on condition that I dined with him. There were reasons that day of importance for my not staying with him ; yet every consideration vanished, when I thought of her for whom I was exerting myself. I stayed with him. Fane was frantic this day ; and, imagining, of course, that there was no chance of his leaving his home, I did not refuse to drink freely—to drink deeply ! My doing so was the only chance of keeping him at home. On a sudden he started up, and would quit the house. My utmost exertions could not prevent him. At last I prevailed upon him to call upon the Trevors, as I thought that there, at least, he would be safe. He agreed. As we were passing down Pall Mall, we met two foreigners of distinction, and a Noble of your country ; they were men of whom we both knew little. I had myself introduced Fane to the foreigners a few days before, being aware that they were men of high rank. After some conversation, they asked us to join them at supper, at the house of

their English friend. I declined ; but nothing could induce Fane to refuse them ; and I finally accompanied him. Play was introduced after supper ; I made an ineffectual struggle to get Fane home ; but I was too full of wine to be energetic. After losing a small sum, I got up from the table, and staggering to a sofa, fell fast asleep. Even as I passed Fane's chair in this condition, my master-thought was evident, and I pulled him by the shoulder ; all was useless,—I woke to madness! '—It was terrible to witness the anguish of von Konigstein.

'Could you not clear yourself?' asked Vivian, for he felt it necessary to speak.

'Clear myself! Everything told against me. The villains were my friends, not the sufferer's ; I was not injured ; my dining with him was part of the conspiracy ; he was intoxicated previous to his ruin. Conscious of my innocence, quite desperate, but confiding in my character, I accused the guilty trio, publicly accused them ; they recriminated, and answered ; and without clearing themselves, convinced the public that I was their dissatisfied and disappointed tool. I can speak no more.' Here the head of the unhappy man sunk down upon his breast. His sad tale was told ; the excitement was over ; he now only felt his despair.

It is awful to witness sudden death ; but, oh ! how much more awful it is to witness in a moment the moral fall of a fellow-creature ! How tremendous is the quick succession of mastering passions ! The firm, the terrifically firm, the madly resolute denial of guilt ; that eagerness of protestation, which is a sure sign of crime ;—then the agonising suspense before the threatened proof is produced—the hell of detection !—the audible anguish of sorrow—the curses of remorse—the silence of despair ! Few of us, unfortunately, have passed through life without having beheld some instance of this instantaneous degradation of human nature. But oh ! how terrible is it when the confessed criminal has been but a moment before our friend. What a contrast to the laugh of

joyous companionship is the quivering tear of an agonised frame ! how terrible to be prayed to by those, whose wishes a moment before we lived only to anticipate !

And bitter as might have been the feelings, and racked as might have been the heart of von Konigstein, he could not have felt more at this moment—more exquisite anguish—deeper remorse—than did Vivian Grey.—Openly to have disgraced this man ! How he had been deceived ! His first crime—the first crime of such a being ; of one who had suffered so much—so unjustly ! Could he but have guessed the truth, he would have accused the Baron in private—have awakened him to the enormity of his contemplated crime—have saved him from its perpetration—have saved him from the perpetration of any other. But he had imagined him to be a systematic, a heartless villain—and he looked forward to this night to avenge the memory of———the brother of her that he loved.

‘Von Konigstein,’ said Vivian, after a long silence ; ‘I feel for you. Had I known this, believe me, that I would have spared both you and myself this night of misery. I would have prevented you from looking back to this day with remorse. I am not one who delights in witnessing the misery or degradation of my species. Do not despair ;—you have suffered for that of which you were not guilty ; you must not suffer now for what has passed. Much, much would I give to see you freed from that wretched knave, whose vile career I was very nearly tempted this evening to have terminated for ever. To Lady Madeleine I shall make the communication you desire, and I will answer for her Ladyship that your communication will be credited. Let this give you hope. As to the transactions of this evening, the knowledge of them can never transpire to the world. It is the interest of de Boëffleurs to be silent : if he speak, no one will credit the tale of such a creature, who, if he speak truth, must proclaim his own infamy. For the perfect silence of the Trevor party, I pledge myself. They have done

you too much injustice not to hail with pleasure the opportunity of making you some atonement. And now for the immediate calls upon your honour ;—in what sum are you indebted to Prince Salvinski, and his friend ?’

‘Thousands !—two—three thousand !’

‘I shall then have an opportunity of ridding myself of that, the acquisition of which, to me, has been a matter of the greatest sorrow. Baron von Konigstein, your honour is saved ;—I pledge myself to discharge the claims of Salvinski, and his friend.’

‘Impossible ! I cannot allow——’

‘Stop, sir !—in this business I must command. I wished not to recur to what has passed—you make me. Surely there can be no feelings of delicacy between us two now. If I gave you the treasures of the Indies you would not be under so great an obligation to me as you are already :—I say this with pain. I recommend you to leave Ems to-morrow. Public business will easily account for your sudden departure. Let us not meet again. And now, von Konigstein, your character is yet safe ;—you are yet in the prime of life ;—you have vindicated yourself from that which has preyed upon your mind for years. Cease to accuse your fate ; find the causes of your past misery in your own unbridled passions. Restrain them, and be happy !’ Vivian was about to leave the room, when the Baron started from his seat, and seized his hand ; he would have spoken, but the words died upon his lips ; and before he could recover himself, Vivian had retired.

CHAPTER XIV

THE sudden departure of Baron von Konigstein from the Baths excited great surprise, and sorrow. All wondered at the cause, and all regretted the effect. The Archduke missed his good stories :—the Rouge-et-Noir table, his constant presence ; and Monsieur

le Restaurateur gave up, in consequence, an embryo idea of a fête and fire-works for his own benefit; which agreeable plan he had trusted with his Excellency's generous co-operation as steward, or patron, he should have had no difficulty in carrying into execution. But no one was more surprised, and more regretted the absence of his Excellency, than his friend Mr. Fitzloom. What could be the reason?—Public business of course. Indeed he had learnt as much, confidentially, from Cracowsky. He tried Mr. Grey, but could elicit nothing satisfactorily; he pumped Mr. St. George, but produced only the waters of oblivion: Mr. St. George was gifted, when it suited his purpose, with a most convenient want of memory. There must be something in the wind—perhaps a war. Was the independence of Greece about to be acknowledged, or the dependence of Spain about to be terminated? What first-rate power had marched a million of soldiers into the land of a weak neighbour, on the mere pretence of exercising the military? What patriots had had the proud satisfaction of establishing a constitutional government without bloodshed—to be set aside in the course of the next month in the same manner? Had a conspiracy for establishing a republic in Russia been frustrated by the timely information of the intended first Consuls? Were the Janissaries learning mathematics?—or had Lord Cochrane taken Constantinople in the James Watt steam-packet? One of these many events must have happened—but which? At length Fitzloom decided on a general war. England must interfere either to defeat the ambition of France—or to curb the rapacity of Russia—or to check the arrogance of Austria—or to regenerate Spain—or to redeem Greece—or to protect Portugal—or to shield the Brazils—or to uphold the Bible Societies—or to consolidate the Greek Church—or to monopolise the commerce of Mexico—or to disseminate the principles of free trade—or to keep up her high character—or to keep up the price of corn.—England must interfere. In spite of his conviction, how-

ever, Fitzloom did not alter the arrangements of his tour—he still intended to travel for two years. All he did, was to send immediate orders to his broker in England to sell two millions of consols. The sale was of course effected—the example followed—stocks fell ten per cent—the exchange turned—money became scarce. The public funds of all Europe experienced a great decline—smash went the country banks—consequent runs on the London—a dozen Baronets failed in one morning—Portland-Place deserted—the cause of infant Liberty at a terrific discount—the Greek loan disappeared like a vapour in a storm—all the new American States refused to pay their dividends—manufactories deserted—the revenue in a decline—the country in despair—Orders in Council—meetings of Parliament—change of Ministry—and new loan! Such were the terrific consequences of a diplomatist turning blackleg! This secret history of the late distress is a lesson to all modern statesmen. Rest assured, that in politics, however tremendous the effects, the causes are often as trifling, and sometimes still more despicable.

Vivian found his reception by the Trevor party, the morning after the memorable night, a sufficient reward for all his anxiety and exertion. St. George, a generous, open-hearted young man, full of gratitude to Vivian, and regretting his previous want of cordiality towards him, now delighted in doing full justice to his coolness, courage, and ability. Lady Madeleine said a great deal in the most graceful and impressive manner; but Violet Fane scarcely spoke. Vivian, however, read in her eyes her approbation and her gratitude. Mr. Sherborne received our hero with a set speech, in the middle of which he broke down; for the old gentleman's stout heart was full: and, shaking Vivian warmly by the hand, he gave him, in a manner which affected all present, his blessing—'I knew I was right in my opinion of you; I saw directly you were not a mere young man of the present day—you all see I was right in my opinion; if I hadn't been, I should have owned it—I should have had the

candour to acknowledge I was wrong—never ashamed to confess I'm mistaken.'

'And now, how came you to discover the whole plot, Mr. Grey?' asked Lady Madeleine, 'for we have not yet heard. Was it at the table?'

'They would hardly have had recourse to such clumsy instruments, as would have given us the chance of detecting the conspiracy by casual observation. No, no, we owe our preservation and our gratitude to one, whom we must hereafter count among our friends. I was prepared, as I told you, for everything; and though I had seen similar cards to those with which they played only a few hours before, it was with difficulty that I satisfied myself at the table, that the cards we lost by were prepared; so wonderful is the contrivance!'

'But who is the unknown friend?' said Violet Fane, with great eagerness.

'I must have the pleasure of keeping you all in suspense,' said Vivian: 'cannot any of you guess?'

'None—none—none!'

'What say you then to——Essper George?'

'Impossible!'

'It is the fact, that he, and he alone, is our preserver. Soon after my arrival at this place, this singular being was seized with the unaccountable fancy of becoming my servant. You all remember his unexpected appearance one day in the saloon. In the evening of the same day, I found him sleeping at the door of my room; and thinking it high time that he should be taught more discretion, I spoke to him very seriously the next morning respecting his troublesome and eccentric conduct. It was then that I learnt his wish. I objected, of course, to engaging a servant of whose previous character I was ignorant, and of which I could not be informed; and one whose peculiar habits would render both himself and his master notorious. While I declined his services, I also advised him most warmly to give up all idea of deserting his present mode of life, for which I thought him extremely

well suited. The consequence of my lecture, was what you all perceived with surprise, a great change in Essper's character. He became serious, reserved, and retiring ; and commenced his career as a respectable character, by throwing off his quaint costume. In a short time, by dint of making a few bad bargains, he ingratiated himself with Ernstorff, von Konigstein's pompous Chasseur. His object in forming this connection, was to gain an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the duties of a gentleman's servant, and in this he has succeeded. About a week since, he purchased from Ernstorff a large quantity of cast-off apparel of the Baron's, and other perquisites of a great man's valet ; among these were some playing cards which had been borrowed one evening in great haste from the servant of that rascal de Bœffleurs, and never returned. On accidentally examining these cards, Essper, to his horror, and surprise, detected they were marked. The system on which the marks are formed and understood, is so simple and novel, that it was long before I could bring myself to believe that his suspicions were founded even on a probability. At length, however, he convinced me. It is at Vienna, he tells me, that he has met with these cards before ; or with some marked, if not on the same, certainly on a similar principle. The marks are all on the rim of the cards ; and an experienced dealer, that is to say a black-leg, can with these marks produce any results, and combinations, which may suit his purpose. Essper tells me that de Bœffleurs is even more skilled in sleight of hand than himself. From Ernstorff, Essper learnt on the day of the fête that Mr. St. George was to dine with the Chevalier at the Baron's apartments on the morrow, and that there was a chance that I should join them. He suspected that villainy was in the wind, and when I retired to my room at a late hour on the night or the fête, I there met him, and it was then that he revealed to me everything which I have told you. Am I not right then, in calling him our preserver ?'

'What can be done for him ?' said Lady Madeleine.

‘His only wish is already granted ; he is my servant. That he will serve me diligently, and faithfully, I have no doubt. I only wish that he would accept, or could appreciate a more worthy reward.’

‘Can man be more amply rewarded,’ said Miss Fane, ‘than by choosing his own remuneration ? I think he has shown in his request, his accustomed talent. I must go and see him this moment.’

‘Say nothing of what has passed, he is prepared for silence from all parties.’

A week, a happy week passed over, and few minutes of the day found Vivian absent from the side of Violet Fane ; and now he thought again of England, of his return to that country under very different circumstances to what he had ever contemplated. Soon, very soon, he trusted to write to his father, to announce to him the revolution in his wishes, the consummation of his hopes. Soon, very soon, he trusted that he should hail his native cliffs, a reclaimed wanderer, with a matured mind, and a contented spirit ; his sorrows forgotten, his misanthropy laid aside.

CHAPTER XV

IT was about a week after the departure of the Baron, that two young Englishmen, who had been College friends of Mr. St. George, arrived at the Baths. These were Mr. Anthony St. Leger and Mr. Adolphus St. John. In the academic shades of Christchurch, these three gentlemen had, when youths, succeeded to the admiring envy of all undergraduates, and to the heavy cost both of their purses and their constitutions, in a faint imitation of the second-rate debauchery of a metropolis. At Oxford, that venerable nurse of wit and humour,—where fun, like their sermons, though orthodox is rather dull,—a really facetious fellow of New College had

dubbed these infant libertines 'All Saints.' Among their youthful companions they bore the more martial style of 'The Three Champions,' St. George, St. John, and St. Anthony.

St. John and St. Anthony had just completed the grand tour ; and after passing the Easter at Rome, had returned through the Tyrol from Italy. Since then, they had travelled over most parts of Germany ; and now, in the beginning of July, found themselves at the Baths of Ems. Two years' travel had not produced any very beneficial effect on either of these sainted personages. They left the University with empty heads and vitiated minds. A season in London introduced them to the life of which they had previously only read and heard in the accounts of lying novels, and the boastings of worn-out roués ; and they felt disgust at their college career, only because they could now compare their former crude dissipation, with the resources of the most miraculous of modern cities. Travelling, as they had done, with minds utterly incapable either of observation or reflection, they had gained by visiting the capitals of all Europe, only a due acquaintance with the vices of each ; and the only difference that could be observed in their conduct on their return, was, that their affectation was rather more disgusting, because it was more obtrusive. What capital companions for old Sherborne !

'Corpo di Bacco ! my champion, who ever thought of meeting thee, thou holy saint ! By the eye-brow of Venus, my spirit rejoiceth !' exclaimed St. Anthony, whose peculiar affectation was an adoption in English of the Italian oaths.

'This is the sweetest spot, St. Anthony, that we have found since we left Paradiso ; that is, St. George, in the vulgar tongue, since we quitted Italia. "Italia ! oh, Italia !" —I forget the rest, probably you remember it. Certainly a most sweet spot this, quite a Gaspar !'

Art was the peculiar affectation of St. John ; he was, indeed, quite a patron of the *belle Arti*—had scattered

his orders through the studios of most of the celebrated sculptors of Italy, and spoke on all subjects and all things, only with a view to their capability of forming *matériel* for the painter. According to the school of which Mr. St. John was an humble disciple, the only use of the human passions is, that they produce *situations* for the historical painter; and Nature, according to these votaries of the τὸ καλὸν, is only to be valued as affording hints for the more perfect conceptions of a Claude or a Salvator.'

'By the girdle of Venus, a devilish fine woman!' exclaimed St. Anthony.

'A splendid bit!' ejaculated St. John; 'touched in with freedom—a grand *tournure*—great *goût* in the swell of the neck. What a study for Retsch!'

'In the name of the Graces, who is it, mio Santo?'

'Ay! name, name *la bellissima Signora*.'

'The "fine bit," St. John, is my sister.'

'The devil!'

'*Diavolo!*'

'Will you introduce us, most holy man?'

This request from both, simultaneously arranging their mustachios.

The two Saints were accordingly, in due time, introduced; but finding the attention of Violet Fane always engrossed, and receiving some not very encouraging responses from Lady Madeleine, they voted her Ladyship cursedly satirical; and passing a general censure on the annoying coldness of English women, they were in four-and-twenty hours attached to the suite of the Miss Fitzlooms, to whom they were introduced by St. George as his most particular friends, and were received with the most flattering consideration.

'By the aspect of Diana! fine girls, and some blood in them!' swore St. Anthony.

'Truly most gorgeous colouring! quite Venetian! Aurelia is a perfect Giorgione!' said St. John.

'Madeleine,' said St. George, one morning to his

sister ; ‘ have you any objection to make up a party with the Fitzlooms to pass a day at Nassau ? You know we have often talked of it ; and as Violet is so well now, and the weather so delightful, there surely can be no objection. The Fitzlooms are very agreeable people ; and though you don’t admire the Santi, still, upon my word, when you know them a little more, you’ll find them very pleasant fellows ; and they’re extremely good-natured ; and just the fellows for such a party ; and I’ll take care that they don’t slang Mr. Sherborne, whom, by-the-bye, Mr. St. John very much admires. He says he’d make a grand head for Ludovico Caracci—something very Bolognese in the grey tints of his forehead. Do not give me a refusal ! I’ve set my mind upon your joining the party. Pray nod assent—thank you—thank you. Now I must go and arrange everything. Let’s see—there are seven Fitzlooms ; for we can’t count on less than two horrid boys ; yourself, Mr. Sherborne, Grey, Violet, and myself, five—the Santi—quite enough—quite enough—a most delightful party. Half-a-dozen servants, and as many donkeys, will manage the provisions. Then three light carriages will take us all. “ By the wand of Mercury ! ” as St. Anthony would vow, most admirably planned ! ’

‘ By the breath of Zephyr ! a most lovely day, Miss Fane,’ said St. Anthony, on the morning of the intended excursion.

‘ Quite a Claude ! ’ said St. John.

‘ Almost as beautiful as an Italian winter’s day, Mr. St. Leger ? ’ asked Miss Fane.

‘ Hardly, hardly ! ’ said St. Anthony, with a serious air ; for he imagined the question to be quite genuine.

‘ Lady Madeleine, I cannot take my eyes off that venerable countenance ! ’ said St. John, speaking of Mr. Sherborne. ‘ There are some flesh-tints on the higher cheek, which almost make me fancy myself in the Gallery at Bologna. He doesn’t rouge now, does he ? You may speak perfectly in confidence. I assure your Lady-

ship that nothing shall transpire ; only I'm very curious to know ; such tints I never saw before !'

'Really, Mr. St. John,' said her Ladyship, smiling ; 'I regret very much that I am not initiated in the mysteries of Mr. Sherborne's toilet ; but my uncle is a very candid man, and I have no doubt he will confess in a minute if he's guilty of making up ; suppose you ask him.'

'Why, no ; at his age, people of his country have odd prejudices. He may not make up ; and he might feel a little offended. To say the truth, I think it is *au naturel*. There is a grey tint under the eye, which I don't think that any modern colours could have produced—perfectly Ludovico, perfectly. If he do make up, I should like very much to know where he gets his colour : that's a secret, Lady Madeleine, which seems to be lost for ever. I was talking the other day to Benvenuti, the great Florentine painter, about that very point :—"Benvenuti," said I—a very gentlemanly man is Benvenuti. It has often struck me, I don't know whether it has your Ladyship—probably it may have ; that all men of genius are very gentlemanly. For instance, take all the artists of ancient and modern times. We know very little of Apelles ; yet we do know that he was the intimate friend of Alexander the Great : and all painters who are intimate friends of crowned heads, and who are in the habit of going to court, are, I have remarked, very gentlemanly. Now, for instance, can you possibly meet with a more gentlemanly man than Sir Thomas Lawrence ? and Benvenuti, too, as I said before, Benvenuti is a very gentlemanly man. I was saying to him one day, as I mentioned—"Cavaliero !"—for I need not tell your Ladyship that the great artist has the honour of being a Knight of—'

'Thrice holy man !' halloed out St. Anthony to St. John ;—"thrice holy man ! the champion wishes to know whether you have arranged about the malvoisie. Miss Fane has decided for the malvoisie. By the body of Bacchus, a right good liquor !'

'Lady Madeleine, will you excuse the anecdote of

Benvenuti at present?—the truth is, I am butler, and your charming conversation is making me, I fear, neglect my duties.’ So saying, ran off the Saint.

The carriages are at the door ; into the first ascended Mrs. Fitzloom, two daughters and the travelling Saints. The second bore Lady Madeleine, Mr. Fitzloom, and his two sons ; the third division was commanded by Mr. Sherborne, and was formed of St. George and Aurelia Fitzloom, Miss Fane, and Vivian.

Away, away rolled the carriages, the day was beautiful, the sky was without a cloud, and a mild breeze prevented the heat of the sun from being overpowering. All were in high spirits ; for St. George had made a capital master of the ceremonies, and had arranged the company in the carriages to their mutual satisfaction. St. Anthony swore, by the soul of Psyche ! that Augusta Fitzloom was an angel ; and St. John was in equal raptures with Araminta, who had an expression about the eyes, which reminded him of Titian’s Flora. Mrs. Fitzloom’s natural silence did not disturb the uninterrupted jargon of the Santi, whose affectation, slang, and foppery elicited loud and continued approbation from the fair sisters. The mother sat admiring these sprigs of noble trees. The young Fitzlooms, in crimson cravats, conversed with Lady Madeleine with a delightful military air ; and their happy parent, as he gazed upon them with satisfied affection, internally promised them both a commission in a crack regiment. Each of the boys already imagined that Lady Madeleine was in love with him ; and her Ladyship being convinced that all were happy, did not regret the absence of those she really did love, but was amused ; even Mr. Sherborne was contented, and did not complain. Had he been put in the same carriage with those fools, he really did not think that he should have been able to get on. It showed St. George’s sense, making a different arrangement ; and he must say, that though they did sometimes disagree, he had no right to complain of the general behaviour of St. George towards

him. This was said with a bow to Miss Aurelia Fitzloom;—need I say that Violet and Vivian were satisfied with the arrangement?

The road from Ems to Nassau winds along the banks of the Lahn, through two leagues of most delightful scenery; at the end of which, springing up from the peak of a bold and richly wooded mountain, the lofty tower of the ancient castle of Nassau meets your view. Winding walks round the sides of the mountain, lead through all the varieties of sylvan scenery, and command in all points the most magnificent views of the surrounding country. These finally bring you to the old castle, whose spacious chambers, though now choked up with masses of grey ruin, or covered with underwood, still bear witness to the might of their former lord; the powerful Baron whose sword gained for his posterity a throne. Here it was, by the massy keep, ‘all tenantless, save to the cranny wind,’ that Mr. Sherborne delivered to a youthful auditory, who, seated on the fragments of the ancient walls, rested after the toils of the ascent, the following lecture on Gothic architecture.

On second thoughts, I shall keep it for Mr. Colburn’s magazine. The Misses Fitzloom, with that vivid genius for which young unmarried ladies are celebrated, entered with the most delightful enthusiasm into all the interest of Mr. Sherborne’s discourse. In a few minutes they perfectly understood all the agitated questions which had puzzled the architects of all ages, and each had her separate solution of mysteries, which never can be solved. How delightful is this elegant and enraptured ignorance! How decisive is the opinion of a young lady who has studied architecture in the elevations of the Regent’s Park, on the controversy of the round arch, and the pointed style! How exquisite their animated tattle about mullions, spandrels, and trefoils!

But Mr. Sherborne was delighted with his pupils, and all seemed happy; none happier than Violet Fane. Never did she look so beautiful as to-day—never were her spirits

so animated—never had she boasted that her pulse beat more melodious music, nor her lively blood danced a more healthful measure. After examining all the antique chambers of the castle, and discovering, as they flattered themselves, secret passages, and dark dungeons, and hidden doors, they left this interesting relic of the middle ages ; and soon, by a gradual descent through the most delightful shrubberies, they again found themselves at the bottom of the valley. Here they visited the modern Château of Baron von Stein, one of the most enlightened and able politicians that Germany has ever produced. As Minister of Prussia, he commenced those reforms which the illustrious Hardenberg perfected. For upwards of five centuries the family of Stein have retained their territorial possessions in the valley of the Lahn. Their family castle, at present a ruin, and formerly a fief of the house of Nassau, is now only a picturesque object in the pleasure-grounds of the present lord.

The noon had passed some hours, before the delighted wanderers complained of fatigue, and by that time they found themselves in a pleasant green glade on the skirts of the forest of Nassau. It was nearly environed by mountains, covered with hanging woods, which shaded the beautiful valley, and gave it the appearance of a sylvan amphitheatre. From a rocky cleft in these green mountains, a torrent, dashing down with impetuous force, and whose fall was almost concealed by the cloud of spray which it excited, gave birth to a small and gentle river ; whose banks were fringed with the most beautiful trees, which prevented the sun's darts from piercing its coldness, by bowing their fair heads over its waters. From their extending branches, Nature's choristers sent forth many a lovely lay

Of God's high praise, and of their loves' sweet teen.

Near the banks of this river, the servants, under the active direction of Essper George, had prepared some refreshments for the party. The cloth had been laid

with great neatness on a raised work of wood and turf ; and rustic seats of the same material surrounded the rude table. All kinds of cold meats, and all kinds of pasties, venison, pheasants, plovers, rabbits, pickled fish, prawns, and craw fish, greeted the ravished eyes of the wearied band of foresters. July is not a month for eating ; but, nevertheless, in Germany we are somewhat consoled for the want of the curious varieties of cookery, by the exhilarating presence of white young partridges, delicious ducklings, and most tender leverets. Then there were all sorts of forced meats, and stuffed birds. You commenced with a pompous display of unnecessary science, to extract for a famished fair one the wing and merry-thought of a fairer chicken—when lo, and behold ! the facile knife sunk without an effort into the plump breast, and the unresisting bird discharged a cargo of rich stuffed balls, of the most fascinating flavour. Then July, above all, is the season for fruits ; and though few of the Rhenish grapes were yet ripe, still money had procured some plates of the red and rich Asmannshausers ; and the refreshing strawberry, the luscious peach, the grateful apricot, the thrilling nectarine, and above all, the peerless pine-apple were not wanting. Shall I forget the piquant currant, and the mellow gooseberry ? Pomona forbid ! Humble fruits, I love you, and once loved you more !

‘Well !’ said Violet Fane, ‘I never will be a member of an adventurous party like the present, of which St. George is not manager : this is admirable !’

‘I must not take the whole credit upon myself, Violet ; St. John is butler, and St. Leger my vice-chamberlain.’

‘Well, I can’t praise Mr. St. John, till I’ve tasted the malvoisie which he has promised ; but as for the other part of the entertainment, Mr. St. Leger, I’m sure this is a temptation which it would be a sin even in St. Anthony to withstand.’

‘By the body of Bacchus, very good !’ swore Mr. St. Leger.

‘These mountains,’ said Mr. St. John, ‘remind me of

one of Nicolo Poussin's cool valleys. The party, indeed, give it a different character—quite a Watteau !’

‘Now, Mrs. Fitzloom,’ said St. George, who was quite in his element ; ‘let me recommend a little of this pike. Lady Madeleine, I’ve sent you some lamb. Miss Fitzloom, I hope St. Anthony is taking care of you. Wrightson ! plates to Mr. St. Leger. Holy man, and much beloved ! send that beef to Mr. Sherborne. Araminta, some poulet ? Grey has helped you, Violet ? Aurelia, my dear, some partridge ? William Pitt Fitzloom, I leave you to yourself. George Canning Fitzloom, take care of the ladies near you. Essper George !—where’s Essper George ? St. John, who is your deputy in the wine department ?—Wrightson ! bring those long green bottles out of the river, and put the champagne underneath the willow. Will your Ladyship take some light claret ? Mrs. Fitzloom, you must use your tumbler ; nothing but tumblers allowed, by Miss Fane’s particular request !’

‘St. George ! thou holy man !’ said Miss Fane ; ‘methinks you are very impertinent. You shall not be my patron saint, if you go on so.’

For the next hour there was nothing heard save the calling of servants ; the rattling of knives and forks ; the drawing of corks ; and continued bursts of laughter, which were not occasioned by any brilliant observations, either of the Saints, or any other persons ; but merely the result of an exuberance of spirits on the part of every one present. At last the voice of St. Anthony was heard.

‘Mr. Sherborne, will you wine ?’

‘Sir ! I don’t understand you,’ answered the old gentleman. A cloud was on his brow.

‘Oh ! save my uncle from exploding, Mr. Grey ! for heaven’s sake, put out his passion. If he do not take some liquid immediately, I’m sure he must go off in a rage. Holy St. Anthony has been talking “slang.” Uncle ! Mr. Sherborne ! Mr. St. Leger wishes to know whether he may have the honour of taking wine with you. You don’t seem to understand him.’

‘No ; nor anybody else.’

‘Old Chrononhotonthologos seems as crusty as a bottle of his own undrinkable port,’ whispered St. Anthony to Miss Fitzloom, who was delighted with this brilliant sally. ‘I wonder what’s the use of these boring old uncles !’ Miss Fitzloom laughed still more at a remark which was still more brilliant.

‘A magnificent study, that old uncle of St. George’s !’ whispered St. John to Araminta. ‘I wish I could get him to sit. I daresay there’s some poor devil of an artist at the Baths, who’d touch him in very prettily with black chalk. I must ask the old man. Let me give you a little more pheasant.’

‘Well, Aurelia !’ said Lady Madeleine, ‘do you prefer our present mode of life to feasting in an old hall, covered with banners and battered shields, and surrounded by mysterious corridors and dark dungeons.’ Aurelia was so flattered by the notice of Lady Madeleine, that she made her no answer ; probably because she was intent on a plover’s egg.

‘I think we might all retire to this valley,’ said Miss Fane, ‘and revive the old feudal times with great success. St. George might take us to Nassau Castle, and you, Mr. Fitzloom, might refortify the old tower of Stein. With two sons, however, who are about to enter the Guards, I’m afraid we must be your vassals. Then what should we do ? We couldn’t have wood parties every day : I suppose we should get tired of each other. No ! that does seem impossible ; don’t you all think so ?’

Omnes, ‘Impossible, impossible !’

‘We must, however, have some regular pursuit, some cause of constant excitement, some perpetual source of new emotions. New ideas of course, we must give up ; there would be no going to London for the season, for new opinions to astound country cousins on our return. Some pursuit must be invented ; we all must have something to do. I have it, I have it ! St. George shall be a tyrant !’

‘I’m very much obliged to you, Violet.’

‘Yes! a bloody, unprincipled, vindictive, remorseless tyrant, with a long black beard; I can’t tell how long! about twenty thousand times longer than Mr. St. Leger’s mustachios.’

‘By the beard of Jove!’ swore St. Anthony, as he started from his seat, and arranged with his thumb and forefinger the delicate Albanian tuft of his upper lip; ‘By the beard of Jove, Miss Fane, I’m obliged to you!’

‘Well then,’ continued Violet, ‘St. George being a tyrant, Lady Madeleine must be an unhappy, ill-used, persecuted woman!’

‘Now, Violet, my dear! do be calm, do restrain yourself!’

‘An unhappy, ill-used, persecuted woman, living on black bread and green water, in an unknown dungeon. My part shall be to discover her imprisonment. Sounds of strange music attract my attention to a part of the castle which I have not before frequented. There I shall distinctly hear a female voice chaunting the “Bridesmaids’ Chorus,” with Erard’s double pedal accompaniment. By the aid of the Confessors of the two families—two drinking, rattling, impertinent, most corrupt, and most amusing friars: to wit—our sainted friends—’

Here both Mr. St. Leger and Mr. St. John bowed low to Miss Fane.

‘A most lively personage is Miss Fane,’ whispered St. Anthony to his neighbour Miss Fitzloom,—‘great style!’

‘Most amusing, delightful girl—great style—rather a display to-day, I think.’

‘Oh, decidedly! and devilish personal too—devilish; some people wouldn’t like it. I’ve no doubt she’ll say something about you next.’

‘Oh! I shall be very surprised, indeed, if she does, very surprised indeed! It may be very well to you, but Miss Fane must be aware—’

Before this pompous sentence could be finished, an incident occurred which prevented Miss Fane from pro-

ceeding with her allotment of characters, and rendered unnecessary the threatened indignation of Miss Fitzloom.

Miss Fane, as we mentioned, suddenly ceased speaking ; the eyes of all were turned in the direction in which she was gazing—gazing as if she had seen a ghost.

‘What are you looking up at, Violet?’ asked St. George.

‘Didn’t you see anything? didn’t any of you see anything?’

‘None—none—none!’

‘Mr. Grey, surely you must have seen it!’

‘No; I saw nothing.’

‘It could not be fancy—impossible! I saw it distinctly. I cannot be in a dream. See there! there again, on that topmost branch. See! see! it moves!’

Some odd shrill sounds, uttered in the voice of a Pulcinello, attracted the notice of them all, and lo! high in the air, behind a lofty chestnut tree, the figure of a Pulcinello did appear, hopping and vaulting in the unsubstantial air. Now it sent forth another shrill piercing sound, and now, with both its hands, it patted and complacently stroked its ample paunch; dancing all the time, with unremitting activity, and wagging its queer head at the astounded guests.

‘Who, what can it be?’ cried all. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked, and the Santi seemed quite puzzled.

‘Who, what can it be?’

Ere time could be given for any one to hazard a conjecture, the figure had advanced from behind the trees, and had spanned in an instant the festal board, with two enormous stilts, on which they now perceived it was mounted. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked again. The figure imitated their cries in his queer voice, and gradually raising one enormous stilt up into the air, stood only on one support, which was planted behind the lovely Araminta.

‘Oh! inimitable Essper George!’ exclaimed Violet Fane.

Here Signor Punch commenced a *chanson*, which he executed in the tone peculiar to his character, and in a style which drew applauses from all; and then, with a hop, step, and a jump, he was again behind the chestnut tree. In a moment he advanced without his stilts, towards the table. Here, on the turf, he again commenced his antics; kicking his nose with his right foot, and his hump with his left one; executing the most splendid somersets, and cutting all species of capers; and never ceasing for a moment from performing all his movements to the inspiring music of his own melodious voice. At last, jumping up immensely high in the air, he fell as if all his joints were loosened, and the Misses Fitzloom, imagining that his bones were really broken, shrieked again. But now Essper began the wonderful performance of a dead body possessed by a devil; and in a minute his shattered corpse, apparently without the assistance of any of its members, began to jump, and move about the ground with the most miraculous rapidity. At length it disappeared behind the chestnut tree.

‘Grey!’ said St. George; ‘we owe all this timely entertainment to you. I really think it is the most agreeable day I ever passed in all my life.’

‘Oh, decidedly!’ said St. Anthony. ‘St. John, you remember our party to Pæstum with Lady Calabria M’Crater, and the Marquess of Agrigentum. It was nothing to this! Nothing! nothing! Do you know I thought that rather dull.’

‘Yes, dull, dull; too elaborate; too highly finished; nothing of the *pittore improvvisatore*. A party of this kind should be more sketchy in its style; the outline more free, and less detail.’

‘This is all very well for you, young folks,’ said Mr. Sherborne, ‘and Essper is certainly a clever knave; but my dear young friends, if you had had the good fortune of living fifty years ago, when the first Scaramouch that I remember appeared in London, then you might have laughed. As it is, this is all very well of Essper; but——’

Here Mr. Sherborne jumped on his chair, and suddenly stopped. A great green monkey was seated opposite to him, imitating with ludicrous fidelity his energetic action. The laugh was universal. The monkey, with one bound, jumped over Mr. Sherborne's head and disappeared.

'Essper is coming out to-day,' said Vivian, to Miss Fane, 'after a long, and I venture to say, painful forbearance. However, I hope you'll excuse him. It seems to amuse us.'

'Amuse us! I think it's delightful. See! here he comes again.'

He now appeared in his original costume; the one in which Vivian first met him at the fair. Bowing very respectfully to the company, he threw his hand carelessly over his mandolin, and having tried the melody of its strings, sang with great taste, and a sweet voice—sweeter, from its contrast with its previous shrill tones,—a very pretty romance. All applauded him very warmly, and no one more so than Violet Fane.

'Ah! inimitable Essper George, how can we sufficiently thank you! How admirably he plays! and his voice is quite beautiful. Oh! couldn't we dance? wouldn't it be delightful; and he could play on his guitar. Think of the delicious turf!'

Omnes—'Delightful! delightful! delightful!' they rose from table.

'Violet, my dear,' asked Lady Madeleine, 'what are you going to do?'

'By the toe of Terpsichore! as Mr. St. Leger would say, I am going to dance.'

'But remember, dearest, to-day you have done so much!—let us be wise—let us be moderate; though you feel so much better, still think what a change to-day has been from your usual habits!'

'But, dearest Lady Madeleine, think of dancing on the turf, and I feel so well—so——'

'Oh! let the dear creature dance if she likes,' said Mr. Sherborne: 'my opinion is, that dancing never does a

young woman any harm. Whom you'll get to dance with you, though,' turning to the Misses Fitzloom, 'I can't tell; as to what the young men of the present day call dancing——'

'By the Graces! I am for the waltz,' said St. Anthony.

'It has certainly a very free touch to recommend it,' said St. John.

'No, no,' said Violet; 'let us all join in a country dance. Mr. Sherborne, shall I introduce you to a partner?'

'Ah! you little angel,' said the delighted old man; 'you look just like your dear mother, that you do!'

'We staid old personages do not dance,' said Lady Madeleine; 'and therefore I recommend you a quadrille.'

The quadrille was soon formed: Violet made up for not dancing with Vivian, at the Archduke's. She was in the most animated spirits, and kept up a successful rivalry with Mr. St. Leger, who evidently prided himself, as Mr. Fitzloom observed, 'on his light fantastic toe.' Now he pirouetted like Paul, and now he attitudinised like Albert; and now Violet Fane eclipsed all his exertions by her inimitable imitations of Ronzi Vestris's rushing and arrowy manner. St. Anthony, in despair, but quite delighted, revealed a secret which had been taught him by a Spanish dancer at Milan; but then Violet Fane vanquished him for ever, with the *pas de Zephyr* of the exquisite Fanny Bias.

The day was fast declining when the carriages arrived; the young people were in no humour to return; and as, when they had once entered the carriage, the day seemed finished for ever, they proposed walking part of the way home. Lady Madeleine made little objection to Violet joining the party, as she feared after the exertion that Miss Fane had been making, a drive in an open carriage would be dangerous; and yet the walk was too long, but all agreed that it would be impossible to shorten it; and, as Violet declared that she was not the least fatigued, the lesser evil was therefore chosen. The carriages

rolled off; at about half-way from Ems, the two empty ones were to wait for the walking party. Lady Madeleine smiled with fond affection, as she waved her hand to Violet the moment before she was out of sight.

‘And now,’ said St. George; ‘good people all, instead of returning by the same road, it strikes me, that there must be a way through this little wood—you see there is an excellent path. Before the sun has set, we shall have got through it, and it will bring us out, I have no doubt, by the old cottage which you observed, Grey; when we came along I saw a gate, and path there—just where we first got sight of Nassau Castle—there can be no doubt about it. You see it’s a regular right-angle, and besides varying the walk, we shall at least gain a quarter of an hour, which, after all, as we have to walk near three miles, is an object. It’s quite clear—quite clear: if I’ve a head for anything, it’s for finding my way.’

‘I think you’ve a head for everything,’ said Aurelia Fitzloom, in a soft sentimental whisper; ‘I’m sure we owe all our happiness to-day to you!’

‘If I have a head for everything, I have a heart only for one person!’

As every one wished to be convinced, no one offered any argument in opposition to St. George’s view of the case; and some were already in the wood.

‘St. George, St. George,’ said Violet Fane, ‘I don’t like walking in the wood so late; pray come back.’

‘Oh, nonsense, Violet!—come, come. If you don’t like to come, you can walk by the road—you’ll meet us round by the gate—it’s only five minutes’ walk.’ Ere he had finished speaking, the rest were in the wood, and some had advanced. Vivian strongly recommended Violet not to join them; he was sure that Lady Madeleine would not approve it—he was sure that it was very dangerous—extremely dangerous; and, by-the-bye, while he was talking, which way had they gone? he didn’t see them. He halloed—all answered—and fifty thousand echoes besides. ‘We certainly had better go by the road

—we shall lose our way if we try to follow them ; nothing is so puzzling as walking in woods—we had much better keep to the road.’ So by the road they went.

The sun had already sunk behind the mountains, whose undulating forms were thrown into dark shadow against the crimson sky. The thin crescent of the new moon floated over the eastern hills, whose deep woods glowed with the rosy glories of twilight. Over the peak of a purple mountain glittered the solitary star of Evening. As the sun dropped, universal silence seemed to pervade the whole face of Nature. The voice of the birds was stilled ; the breeze, which had refreshed them during the day, died away, as if its office were now completed ; and none of the dark sounds and sights of hideous Night yet dared to triumph over the death of Day. Unseen were the circling wings of the fell bat ; unheard the screech of the waking owl ; silent the drowsy hum of the shade-born beetle ! What heart has not acknowledged the influence of this hour—the sweet and soothing hour of twilight !—the hour of love, the hour of adoration, the hour of rest !—when we think of those we love, only to regret that we have not loved more dearly ; when we remember our enemies only to forgive them !

And Vivian, and his beautiful companion owned the magic of this hour, as all must do—by silence. No word was spoken, yet is silence sometimes a language. They gazed, and gazed again, and their full spirits held due communion with the starlit sky, and the mountains, and the woods, and the soft shadows of the increasing moon. Oh ! who can describe what the o’ercharged spirit feels at this sacred hour, when we almost lose the consciousness of existence, and our souls seem to struggle to pierce futurity ! In the forest of the mysterious Odenwald, in the solitudes of the Bergstrasse, had Vivian at this hour often found consolation for a bruised spirit—often in adoring Nature had forgotten man. But now, when he had never felt Nature’s influence more powerful ; when he had never forgotten man, and man’s world more

thoroughly ; when he was experiencing emotions, which, though undefinable, he felt to be new ; he started when he remembered that all this was in the presence of a human being ! Was it Hesperus he gazed upon, or something else that glanced brighter than an Evening star ? Even as he thought that his gaze was fixed on the countenance of Nature, he found that his eyes rested on the face of Nature's loveliest daughter !

‘Violet ! dearest Violet !’

As in some delicious dream, the sleeper is awakened from his bliss by the sound of his own rapturous voice ; so was Vivian roused by these words from his reverie, and called back to the world which he had forgotten. But ere a moment had passed, he was pouring forth in a rapid voice, and incoherent manner, such words as men speak only once. He spoke of his early follies—his misfortunes—his misery—of his matured views—his settled principles—his plans—his prospects—his hopes—his happiness—his bliss : and when he had ceased, he listened, in his turn, to some small still words, which made him the happiest of human beings. He bent down—he kissed the soft silken cheek which now he could call his own. Her hand was in his ; her head sank upon his breast. Suddenly she clung to him with a strong grasp. ‘Violet ! my own, my dearest ; you are overcome. I have been rash, I have been imprudent. Speak, speak, my beloved ! say you are not ill !’

She spoke not, but clung to him with a fearful strength—her head still upon his breast—her full eyes closed. In the greatest alarm, he raised her off the ground, and bore her to the river-side. Water might revive her. But when he tried to lay her a moment on the bank, she clung to him gasping, as a sinking person clings to a stout swimmer. He leant over her ; he did not attempt to disengage his arms ; and, by degrees, by very slow degrees, her grasp loosened. At last her arms gave way and fell by her side and her eyes partly opened.

‘Thank God ! thank God ! Violet, my own, my beloved, say you are better !’

She answered not—evidently she did not know him—evidently she did not see him. A film was on her sight, and her eye was glassy. He rushed to the water-side, and in a moment he had sprinkled her temples, now covered with a cold dew. Her pulse beat not—her circulation seemed suspended. He rubbed the palms of her hands—he covered her delicate feet with his coat ; and then rushing up the bank into the road, he shouted with frantic cries on all sides. No one came, no one was near. Again, with a cry of fearful anguish, he shouted as if an hyæna were feeding on his vitals. No sound :—no answer. The nearest cottage he remembered was above a mile off. He dared not leave her. Again he rushed down to the water-side. Her eyes were still open—still fixed. Her mouth also was no longer closed. Her hand was stiff—her heart had ceased to beat. He tried with the warmth of his own body to revive her. He shouted—he wept—he prayed. All, all in vain. Again he was in the road—again shouting like an insane being. There was a sound. Hark !—It was but the screech of an owl !

Once more at the river-side—once more bending over her with starting eyes—once more the attentive ear listening for the soundless breath. No sound ! not even a sigh ! Oh ! what would he have given for her shriek of anguish !—No change had occurred in her position, but the lower part of her face had fallen ; and there was a general appearance which struck him with awe. Her body was quite cold :—her limbs stiffened. He gazed, and gazed, and gazed. He bent over her with stupor, rather than grief stamped on his features. It was very slowly that the dark thought came over his mind—very slowly that the horrible truth seized upon his soul. He gave a loud shriek, and fell on the lifeless body of VIOLET FANE !

END OF VOL. I.

